

THE HISTORY
OF THE
UNITED
PATTERNMAKERS'
ASSOCIATION

By
W. MOSSES, J.P.



W. MOSSES,
General Secretary, 1884.



W. MOSSES,
General Secretary, 1917.

The History of the United Pattern Makers' Association

1872-1922

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PUBLISHERS' PREFACE.

The Executive Council of the United Patternmakers' Association, in deciding to present each member of the society with a souvenir copy of the "Society's History of the Past Fifty Years," had necessarily, in choosing the writer, to have regard to his ability and knowledge of the period under review.

It also should be obvious that in delegating this work to the author, their responsibility for the views expressed in the book ceases. From the nature of the work entailed, criticism, comments, and opinions of the powers that be, are the author's own, and he is entirely responsible for the text matter.

We hope the members will accept and appreciate this opportunity given by the Executive to promote and encourage a knowledge of the society's life and labours.

Foreword.

THE issue of the Jubilee History of our Society requires neither an excuse nor an apology. Fifty years is a long period to look forward to, and is almost as long to look back upon ; it is much longer than the average working life of a workman, and during any period of half-a-century such changes in the industrial, economic, and political life of the nation take place as to fully justify a pause in our various activities in order to allow of an introspective review of ourselves as well as of that aggregation of our fellow craftsmen who have banded themselves together under the title which represents our organisation. Those of us who have reached or are approaching the sere and yellow stage, and who cast their thoughts back to their youthful days, cannot but be struck with the great change in the trend of thought fifty years ago and at the present time. When our society was founded workmen had to wrestle with their problems either individually or in very small communities. This undoubtedly made for initiative, self-reliance, and restraint ; it also retarded individual development and general progress. Nowadays we have gone to the other extreme ; we take no blame and acknowledge no responsibility for our present disabilities as workmen. All the industrial and economic ills from which we suffer are attributed to the present social system, and we call upon the State to afford that relief which apparently we are unable to obtain by our own individual or collective efforts. This is the easiest way of absolving ourselves from

the trouble and responsibility of thinking out and solving our own problems. We are enjoined on every hand to strike the ballot box as the only way in which we can remedy the social evils from which we suffer ; but we look in vain for any exhortation from our mentors in the Trade Union movement which enjoins the virtues of self-denial, unselfishness, and charity to all men as a necessary preliminary to these collective efforts to ameliorate the industrial conditions of the masses in this country. It must not be supposed for one moment that the writer is posing as an apostle of individualism ; the contrary is the case. All that he is trying to point out is that if we wish to build surely and well we must be sure of our foundations, and the chief element in any ameliorative organisation is the character and intelligent purposefulness of the individuals who seek to effect the reformation of their fellows. It is to be hoped that a study of these pages will enable our members to fully appreciate the sterling qualities of the pioneers of our society, as well as to trace the general development of thought and of policy which has guided our leaders during the first half-century of our existence.

W. M.

24th March, 1922.

Introductory.

1872-1922.



IN compiling the history of a trade organisation it is a necessary preliminary that some reference should be made to the industry from which it springs and is maintained. It would be exceedingly congenial to the writer, as well as giving a fine flavour of antiquity to his labours, if we could claim a direct and unbroken genealogical descent from the founder of the metal trades—Tubal Cain—but the biblical references are somewhat uncertain and much too vague to justify a claim that this grand old master craftsman numbered our trade amongst those he founded, practised, and taught, so we must perforce allow our friends the blacksmiths to claim a monopoly of the first and greatest industrial figure in history.

The trade of patternmaking is undoubtedly one of the most modern known to industry, the art of making a model to be reproduced in the softer metals for ornamentation or domestic uses by casting in sand or some other impressionable medium, is certainly of considerable antiquity, but until the introduction of power machinery wrought iron was invariably used in structural and for other purposes for which the more ductile metals were unsuitable, and we are quite safe in surmising that the patternmakers of the Middle Ages were the woodworkers whose work enriched the ecclesiastical and feudal buildings of that time, and which are still the envy and admiration of those judges of wood craftsmanship who have been privileged to examine them.

Modern industrial developments created a demand for a class of workman related to but more varied than the blacksmith, who, with the shipwright, were assuredly the forerunners of the numerous sections of mechanics employed in the shipbuilding and engineering industries. The first

machinery, printing presses, textile machinery, etc., had cast iron parts, and—we again hazard the conjecture—it is probable that one type of all-round mechanic—the millwright—made the necessary patterns, cast, machined, fitted them and fixed them in position. We often claim to be the successor to the millwright; which is perfectly true so far as his wood patterns were concerned. But he is equally the father of the fitter, turner, and the other numerous varieties of tradesmen who are concerned in the manufacture of machinery. As a matter of fact, we cannot claim a pure descent from any particular type of craftsman. When ours was an infant industry there were no lines of demarcation, and anyone having a kit of woodworking tools with the knowledge of how to use them and an inclination to attempt a new line of work was free to come into our trade, and many of the pioneers of our industry were recruited from the ranks of the carpentering, shipwright, and other wood-working trades, and it was only when an application of steam motive power to machinery and its consequent enormous development that the various component industries connected with our industry became specialised, and in the general sorting out our branch of the trade became recognised as an important and, in our opinion, a necessary unit. It is extremely improbable that twenty-five years before the institution of our society there was a single patternmaker who had served a regular apprenticeship to our trade, and the probability is that at least one half of those who were responsible for our institution had been at one time partially or wholly engaged in some other occupation. If these assumptions are well founded it would appear that our existence as a separate and defined section of the engineering trade is not much longer than our existence as a Trade Union representing our particular branch of engineering.

We are far from claiming that the institution of our organisation heralded the dawn of Trade Unionism in our trade. In every branch of industry the establishment of an industrial combination of workmen, whatever form it took, was the inevitable result of the institution and development of that industry. This certainly applied to the engineering trade, and the wood and iron men, who were a hundred years ago the vanguard of the great armies of to-day, formed them-

selves into local unions at a time when such combinations were not only illegal, but were looked upon as being a danger to the State, and were suppressed as such, and some of our older trade societies have a quite justifiable pride in the fact that their earlier meetings were held in secret, and their records had to be buried in the ground to render those charged with their safe custody immune from the terrors of the law. In 1872 the first Trade Union Act was passed, but long before that year they were tolerated, and in 1851 most of the local organisations connected with engineering amalgamated under the well-known but now extinct title of the "Amalgamated Society of Engineers." The great majority of the organised members of our trade belonged to this society, and it was during the period between the amalgamation and the institution of our society in 1872 that our trade emerged from its somewhat chrysalis stage and became a distinct and separate unit.

In spite of the amalgamation our trade was very badly organised. Perhaps it was no worse in this respect than other branches of engineering. Of that period we have no definite data, but undoubtedly the great majority of pattern-makers were, during the period from 1851-1872, non-society men and quite unsusceptible to the blandishments of the handful of their organised shopmates or the pressure of society men outside their particular department.

How long our pioneer members would have remained in this moribund condition will, of course, always be a matter of conjecture, but the awakening of the dry bones took place as a result of the historic nine hours' strike on the Tyne and Wear in 1871. This dispute will always rank as one of the most remarkable in industrial history, and certainly was the most successful movement ever undertaken by the engineering trade. It was undertaken long before a National Employers' Federation was thought of, and it might have been reasonable to expect that to pit a national industrial organisation against two bodies of local employers, with scarcely a pretence to unity or cohesion, was to enter into a contest in which the dice were heavily loaded against the employers. The men, however, were handicapped by faulty and incomplete organisation, and although the vast majority

came out on strike, a substantial nucleus remained at work. Their numbers were swelled by the importation of foreign workmen, chiefly Germans, this being the first and last time in the history of the engineering trade that foreigners were introduced as strike breakers. However, either the quantity or quality of these importations was insufficient, and after a few weeks the Wear employers gave way, to be followed by their contemporaries on the Tyne when the strike had lasted six months. It was out of the aftermath of this industrial upheaval that our society was born. The organised patternmakers were exceedingly dissatisfied with the part they played in the conduct and settlement of the strike. They never appeared in the picture at all, and as a highly-skilled body of workmen they resented the obscure position they occupied when the laurels of victory were being distributed. It is very probable that they considered they had a real grievance, although it is difficult to realise their grounds for discontent. In any democratic organisation one man's vote is equal in value to another's, and it was owing to their insignificant number that they played so inconspicuous a part in the great struggle, and they were not one whit worse off than the numerous other small sections of the engineering trade comprised in the amalgamation. As a matter of fact, their obscurity was in all probability due to the circumstance that they had no member of the trade who was mentally fitted to take a leading part in the struggle, and the fact that the figure-head of the strike belonged to a small section—the blacksmiths—indicates sufficiently that it was not wholly on account of our paucity of numbers that we played so minor a part in the strike. However, the discontent which was undoubtedly felt by the organised patternmakers communicated itself to their non-society confreres, who were profoundly dissatisfied with the meagre financial support they received, and at the insignificant part our trade had played throughout, and having had the disadvantages of non-unionism rubbed well in during the weeks they had spent on the streets, they determined to profit by the wholesome lesson they had received and resolved to make amends by making a resolute attempt to organise our trade, and after their recent experiences it is scarcely to be wondered at that the form of their conversion was “to hev a society of wor an.”

It is a mistake, however, to suppose that our union was started by disgruntled A.S.E. patternmakers. Their position in that organisation of complete dependence upon the big battalion was well known to the non-society men in our trade, who regarded their position as one to avoid. But the evidence of our registration book shows that none of the A.S.E. of good standing joined our pioneer branches, and it was not until we had been instituted some four years that two proselytes joined us, and whilst our operations were confined to the North-East coast we relied almost wholly on the non-society element for our recruits. This was no self denying ordinance on the part of our pioneers. Our first code of rules, registered on 11th September, 1874, made several provisions for the admission of members of other "societies or associations" to the newly established organisation for patternmakers, and we have copies of circulars issued for propaganda purposes, in which special appeals are directed to members of other societies as well as to non-members, it was not, however, until we had extended our borders to the Midlands and South of England that our proselytising efforts bore fruit.

The reasons and justification for our establishment as a separate society are very lucidly and moderately set forth in our earliest propaganda pamphlets. It is pointed out that our trade constitutes a very small section of the engineering industry, and that we have interests of a special character which are deliberately ignored in a mixed organisation, in which, perforce, we must always constitute an insignificant minority. With this contention we are all, of course, familiar. Much more, however, is implied than is actually stated in our early literature, and it is as well if we state our fundamental principles, not only to recall their application to our trade in the earlier stages of our history, but to judge whether or not the principles of half-a-century ago are applicable or desirable in respect of our present-day needs. As has been already stated, we are a comparatively small, isolated, but necessary section of the engineering trade, and the only section of that industry who have to provide and maintain their own tools. A patternmaker's kit is more varied, numerous, and expensive than that of any artisan who has to provide his own tools. He works very much behind

the scenes, in a different material to that upon which his contemporaries are employed. His work is indirect, inasmuch as the actual product of his labours never appears in the finished article, although the result is apparent enough to those who understand. The patternmaker claims to be the most highly skilled workman connected with his industry, as, in addition to working from complicated mechanical drawings, with nothing else to guide him, he has to have a thorough knowledge of other ancillary trades. He seldom or never makes the same thing twice, and his trade is never learned, and there are fewer plums in patternmaking than in any other skilled occupation connected with his industry. It is almost true to say once a patternmaker always a patternmaker, and the members of our trade who have attained to higher and more responsible positions in the engineering trade are few and far between. Further, there is the financial question. Modern Trade Unionism lives and moves and has its being—so far, at all events, as the skilled trades are concerned—upon its friendly society benefits, and the most flourishing trade organisation is the one which can pay the most varied and highest scale of benefit for the least contribution. As a matter of fact, the Trade Unionist, like every other member of the community, buys in the cheapest market, and when our pioneers were drawing up their rules they sought recruits by outbidding their rivals. It was easy to shoulder superannuation liabilities which would not mature for twenty years, and undoubtedly at the period of our institution we were better employed and less liable to sickness than were the members of mixed engineering societies, and until very recently the expectations formed fifty years ago, that we could run a society on a smaller contribution and with more generous benefits were fully justified.

The foregoing summary of the special circumstances which attached to our trade and which justified the establishment of our society may appear somewhat fanciful and far-fetched to-day, but they were apparent enough in 1872, when a handful of enthusiasts embarked on a perilous and uncertain enterprise in the hope not only of raising and defining the social status of our trade, but of securing for it a more substantial financial recognition in the shape of a higher differential rate of remuneration than existed at the time, or even as it exists now.

Before dealing with the actual institution of our society, we propose to outline other sectional organisations of our trade which existed prior to or concurrently with the early days of our union, because we were not the firstcomers in the arena of separate unionism in our trade. In this connection pride of place must be given to the Leeds Patternmakers, who were the first to institute a society whose members were confined to our trade. We are fortunate in having at our disposal the early records of this pioneer organisation. They are in a good state of preservation and were kept in a condition which would do no discredit to the most efficient of our present-day branch secretaries.

SECTIONAL UNIONS OF PATTERNMAKERS.

THE LEEDS PATTERNMAKERS' ASSOCIATION.

The title of this organisation was somewhat elastic. "The Leeds District Patternmakers' Mutual Aid Society" was founded in July, 1865. The contributions were fixed at 1½d. per week. In addition, a voluntary fund was raised to assist a "London Patternmakers' Advance of Wages Movement." A sum of £6 18s. 11d. having been collected, of which £6 11s. was remitted to the Strike Fund, 3s. 5d. absorbed in expenses, and 4s. 6d. left in hand, which appears to have caused the branch a lot of bother, for we find that when in March, 1866, the Mutual Aid was wound up, 6d. was added to the foregoing balance, and a proposal was made that the 5s. be handed to the Leeds Dispensary. Ultimately, however, this sum was retained in the hands of the society with a view to its further augmentation, when it was designed for "some benevolent institution." Its ultimate destination is, however, wrapped in obscurity.

The institution of this Mutual Aid was something in the nature of a preliminary canter. The Leeds Patternmakers were not ripe for a Trade Union organisation, but they saw very clearly the necessity for a combination of some kind. Considerable unrest existed in the trade, and, as might be conjectured, it arose and found audible expression amongst the few members of our trade who were organised in the A.S.E. They complained that they had difficulty in ventilating their grievances in that organisation, and even when

they did get a hearing they were out-voted and described as a lot of grumblers. That they had ample reason for dissatisfaction may be inferred from the fact that their wages were from 20s. to 22s. per week; a foreman running to the munificent remuneration of 24s. It was under these circumstances that the Mutual Aid was instituted. No salaries were paid, except to the secretary, who received £1 per annum, and during the first year the membership reached a total of thirty.

The experimental combination was sufficiently encouraging to justify a launching out on a somewhat more ambitious scale, and we find that at a meeting held on 14th April, 1866, members were invited to send in suggestions for a code of rules. In all twelve proposed rules were sent in, considered two weeks later and all agreed to, and became operative on May 12th, 1866, when the "Leeds Patternmakers' Sick Society" was formally instituted. It is unfortunate that we have been unable to obtain a copy of these rules, as they are of considerable historic value, being the first code of rules which were applied to our trade as a separate and distinct unit. The new society was certainly of an economical turn of mind, as they decided by resolution that the auditors do the work gratuitously, and that no sick benefit be paid for six months unless in case of urgent necessity. The contributions were fixed at 6d. per fortnight, and the first investment on behalf of our trade was made when on 7th July, 1866, the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Treasurer were authorised to invest £5 in the Skyrack Savings Bank on behalf of the society. The first code of rules had evidently proved insufficient almost as soon as they had been agreed to, as we find that an amended code came into operation on April 13th, 1867, the salary of the Secretary being confirmed at 5s. per quarter. That the branch allowed themselves considerable latitude in their administration of the rules is evidenced by the rescission of Rule 24 for six months, reducing entrance fees one half, the amended scale being 2s. 6d. from 18 to 25 years, with an additional 6d. for every year up to 40, when another 1s. 3d. was imposed on all candidates from that age to 45, which apparently was the limit. This reduction of the entrance fee did not seem to have resulted in any

considerable accession of membership, only three new members being recorded during that period. The amended rules still proving unsatisfactory, it was resolved on 3rd August, 1867, that they be revised "previous to being enrolled under Act of Parliament," and a Committee of five, with power to add to their number, was appointed to carry out the revision. About this time a stimulus to mutual assistance was agreed to in the shape of a premium of 6d. being paid to any member who succeeded in obtaining a job for an out-of-work brother, the latter, however, when successful, having to refund a share of any expense incurred.

At the end of 1867 an important new departure was made by the institution of an Out-of-Work Fund. It was voluntary at first, and was by no means popular. Very few of the members joined it, and others disagreed with it to such an extent that they left the society. However, as the remaining members grew accustomed to the change, the opposition died down, and two years afterwards the Trade Benefit Fund, by special invitation, was generally accepted by most of the members. In 1872 the "Leeds Patternmakers' Association" attained to the dignity of a printed code of rules, which were duly registered on March 8th of that year, only one year after the passing of the first Trade Union Act. The organisation, therefore, must have been one of the first to be registered under the Act.

These rules, although somewhat quaintly phrased at times, were surprisingly appropriate and comprehensive. The preface could very well be embodied in the foreword of our next code of rules. It enjoins the members to better their condition by a system of moral and general improvement in their duty to society, and proceeds to enumerate the assistance they are prepared to render in the way of benefits, which include out-of-work, loss of tools by fire, sickness, superannuation, and to assist those who are for ever incapacitated from following their usual employment to obtain a livelihood by other means, and a solemn warning is addressed to those who believing themselves above the reach of want become dependent upon others whom they refused to help in their days of adversity.

The meetings of the society were held in the William IV. Inn, Briggate. They commenced at 8 p.m., and no business was transacted after 10 p.m. Provision was made for the investment of the funds in what are now known as trustee securities, and the list of officers and their duties were much the same as appear in our own rule book, except that the doorkeeper was known under the picturesque title of "Tyler." The President had much more responsibility than our present-day officer. He had power to grant leave of absence to members requiring a change of air. He also paid funeral money. The rule regarding admissions was much more rigid than is the case at present: not only the member, but his wife had to be of sound health. He was also required to have good abilities as a workman, steady habits, good moral character, and in receipt of the average district rate of wages, and his proposer had to have worked with him. If a single man married a woman of unsound health after admission he forfeited Funeral Benefit at her death. It was further reiterated in a subsequent rule that both the candidate and his wife had to be of good reputation, sober, peaceful, industrious, in perfect health, and not liable to be disordered at particular seasons of the year. Any infringement of these Draconian laws was followed by expulsion and forfeiture of all moneys paid to the society.

Entrance fees ranged from 5s. to candidates 20 to 25 years of age, and up to 20s. to those of 45, which was the age limit, and contributions were fixed at 1s. 6d. per fortnight, of which 9d. was earmarked for sick, 8d. for trade, and 1d. for management. If the funds were reduced below £1 per member provision was made for their augmentation by levy.

The Sick Benefit rule is somewhat similar to our own of that period, and probably had a common origin: 10s. per week was paid for twenty-six weeks, and 5s. for a further like period; thereafter the sick member was exempt from contributions. It is difficult to imagine the paragons these pioneer members must have been—if they carried out their rules—lapsing from grace by getting drunk. So it was ordained, in view of this very remote contingency, that if he was found guilty by the association he was penalised for the first offence by a fine of 5s. and the return of "one week's gift." A second offence carried with it three months' expulsion, and

if the hardened reprobate again offended he was expelled or suffered such other punishment as the Committee of the association thought proper. Members of the original Sick society were allowed to remain members for Sick and Funeral Benefits only at a contribution of 10d. per fortnight; but no new members were admitted after the registration of the then current code of rules. Funeral Benefit was £8, with £5 for a first wife, and provision was made for the attendance of the officers at the funeral of a free member.

Trade Benefit was at the rate of 10s. per week for ten weeks, 7s. for the second ten weeks, and 5s. for the third ten weeks, and he was exempted from payment of contributions for the remainder of his unemployment. Tool Benefit was limited to the modest sum of £3, and was only paid for loss of tools by fire. The fund was maintained by levy. Superannuation was paid after twenty years' membership, with the usual restrictions, at the rate of 5s. per week; after twenty-five years 8s. was paid.

Discipline appears to have been rigidly enforced in these early days. A member censuring another outside the club-room for venturing an opinion was mulcted of 1s. fine; for upbraiding a member in receipt of benefit cost 2s. 6d. The same fine was inflicted for divulging the society's business, except to a member, and it cost a like sum for one member to upbraid another for leaving a situation and returning to it; and 2s. 6d. was the penalty exacted against a member who struck another. Other offences were disorderly conduct whilst in receipt of benefit, in which cases the penalty was made to fit the crime, and members cognisant of this offence and not reporting delinquent were fined 1s. It was a somewhat serious offence for a member to boast of his independence towards his employer: it cost him 2s. 6d. for the first, and 5s. and 10s. for the third and succeeding offences. An echo of the days when Trade Unions were compelled to meet in secret is found in the rule providing that all members gave the password or their name to the Tyler, who forwarded it to the President before the member was admitted during business hours.

The Leeds Society had a very brief existence after the registration of its rules. During 1873 they made overtures to our society for fusion, and terms were agreed to with an

expedition which is a reproach to some modern organisations whose members have long ago agreed to amalgamation, but whose officials have procrastinated in a fashion which does infinitely more credit to their ingenuity than to their loyalty. We have not the exact date of the amalgamation, neither have we the exact terms of the agreement, but it is evident that our rules were accepted *en bloc*, and the actual amalgamation took place during the latter part of 1873. The number of affiliated members was ninety-five, more than one half of the members of the parent society. Bradford and Halifax had a membership of fourteen and thirteen respectively. The temporary lapse of the latter branch resulted in their relegation from being No. 8 Branch to their present position. The new adherents did not come empty-handed. Their funds amounted to £110 3s. 11½d., some £26 less than the total belonging to the larger body. So passed the pioneer organisation in our trade. They showed that such an organisation was possible. From 1866 to 1871 they raised wages from 21s. to 26s. per week. Prior to the war we have never done better. They instituted a comprehensive and effective scale of benefits peculiarly appropriate to our trade, and when the time came they sacrificed separate identity and merged their organisation in a larger and national body, thus practising a self-abnegation which abundantly justified the elevation of the Leeds Branch to the honoured position they now hold as the premier branch of the society.

THE LONDON PATTERNAKERS' SOCIETY—OTHERWISE THE UNITED PATTERNAKERS (LONDON).

This organisation was born, lived, and died quite independently of our society, so we have no documentary evidence of its activities, and inquiries have failed to give any clear outline of its history. It was instituted about the same time as its contemporary in Leeds, and its first meeting-place was the Elephant, in Fenchurch Street. Subsequently a move was made to the Grapes, behind Aldgate Church. In its early days the total membership was about 150, and the members were generally employed around the Thames area, chiefly at the now defunct firms of Penns, Maudsleys, and Humphrey & Tennant. They were a very exclusive and conservative body, and they prided themselves upon including the cream of the

trade in their organisation, about one half of their membership consisting of foremen, chargemen, and men firmly established in their jobs. They possessed sufficient influence to prove themselves a very sharp thorn in the side of the A.S.E. patternmakers, and they undoubtedly were the real cause of the formation of the first Mutual Aid Society in the latter organisation. It is worth while chronicling the institution of this body, and it cannot be done better than by quoting from the admirable account which has been furnished by one of our best-known Birmingham members of the history of the organisation of our trade in the Metropolis in the 'sixties:—

“ The A.S.E. patternmakers had found it very difficult to obtain entry to many of the best engineering shops in the London area through the foremen being members of the London Society of Patternmakers, hence the birth of the A.S.E. Mutual Aid. Now the founders of the Mutual Aid (or, at least, some of them) were very thoughtful, studious men, who were or had been students of the Working Men's College in Great Ormond Street, an institution which at that time was exercising a profoundly beneficial influence in the lives of large numbers of the better-class artisans in the London area. The Rev. F. D. Morris, Tom Hughes, Q.C., M.P., Mr. Ludlow (the first Registrar), the Rev. Charles Kingsley, and many others interested in social work, were amongst the founders and teachers at this College, so that you must realise that the Mutual Aid was at its inception something much more than an ordinary Trade Union movement as we understand these things to-day. But alas for the vanity of human expectation. The high level of morality which dominated Great Ormond Street could not be maintained very long in the Blackfriars Road. The literary and scientific lectures gradually ceased, so that by the time I came on the scene again, early in 1871, the Mutual Aid was merely a respectable sort of free and easy, with a dash of Trade Unionism and gossip at intervals. Up to 1865 the average wages of the London patternmakers had been about 30s. per week of 59 hours, but at this time the Mutual Aid felt strong enough to put in a demand for 6d. per day increase of wages. This was refused by the employers, and a strike of patternmakers was the result. The A.S.E. local E.C. had refused their sanction to a strike, but nevertheless

it still went on and was, in fact, ultimately successful. It lasted a long time, and when some of the employers gave way and paid the rise the A.S.E. local Council withdrew their objections and paid Strike Allowance, and the Mutual Aid achieved a substantial victory."

It is interesting to note at this point, as has already been stated, the Leeds Patternmakers rendered financial assistance to this strike. Before the opening of our Erith Branch the members of our trade were involved in several disputes, which did not directly concern them, *i.e.*, piecework, overtime rates, and manning of machines. In all cases settlements of a sort were effected without the knowledge or consent of the patternmakers, the only result of which was to deplete the funds and injure the prestige of the London Society. In 1879 the Employers' Association gave notice of a reduction of 10s. per week, which the men refused to accept, and were locked out, and although before hostilities actually commenced it was known that the reduction was not to apply to our trade, the patternmakers, influenced no doubt by those belonging to the A.S.E., came out with the general body of workmen. At that time they numbered about 130, and several of their members who refused to come out were expelled. A joint Committee of our trade was formed to look after our interests, but it was dominated by the A.S.E., who were in the majority, and it was chiefly remarkable for the suspicion, recrimination and double-dealing which marked its brief and inglorious existence. The strike lasted from eight to nine months and eventually fizzled out. Its close was marked by an unpleasant incident, which it is impossible to conceive would be practised to-day. The engineers having decided the game was up, passed the word to their patternmaker members, who offered their services before a general resumption, in consequence of which the members of other societies, including our luckless handful, were left out in the cold. No redress was possible, and the London Society found themselves with a depleted exchequer and most of their members out of work. Their position was hopeless, and they had no alternative other than to seek the shelter of a national organisation. An attempt was made by our members in May, 1877, to secure the remnant of sixty, but at that time we had neither organisation, funds, nor reputation in

the London district, and it is not to be wondered that our negotiations proved abortive. They subsequently approached the A.S.E., who refused to accept their superannuation liabilities, and alternately they found shelter in the ranks of the Steam Engine Makers, although several of their members refused to follow the general body and ultimately joined our organisation.

THE UNITED PATTERNMAKERS' SOCIETY.

This is not an error in title. A society of this name actually existed in the Smethwick district in 1876, and our local branch (No. 9) had been engaged in somewhat protracted negotiations in regard to amalgamation. A basis had been agreed to early in 1875, but the local society had backed out, and at an Executive Council Meeting of our society the position between the two organisations was evidently regarded as hopeless, and our Smethwick Branch was instructed to inform their contemporaries that we had adjourned the question *sine die*. As no further reference to this organisation appears in the existing records it is presumable that they gradually petered out. This is borne out by the circumstance that, when in 1885 we sought to change our title, we were informed that a society existed under the name we sought to assume, and no notice had been received of the formal dissolution of that organisation. It took us some time to convince the Registrar that the society no longer existed, and this latter circumstance appears to be its chief claim to distinction, as it is a remarkable fact that although diligent inquiry has been made amongst the old-timers of the Birmingham district, not one of them appears to have remembered or has any knowledge that the society ever existed.

ASSOCIATED PATTERNMAKERS (GLASGOW).

This organisation is almost as mysterious as its Staffordshire prototype. That such a society existed so far back as 1872 we have undeniable proof. We have a record of the then General Secretary of our society and another member holding a meeting of our trade in Glasgow during the latter part of 1875, attended largely by members of the Amalgamated and Glasgow Patternmakers' Societies. A lively discussion took place upon the statement of our claims, and it is somewhat naïvely stated that although both societies gave the

preference to our society before their own it was impossible to obtain a sufficient number of recruits to open a branch. Then, again, the excellent and painstaking Secretary of the Leeds Society, so far back as 1873, preserved the name and address of the Secretary of the Glasgow organisation. It appears that the society had a branch in Belfast, which for some reason, the nature of which we have been unable to ascertain, seceded from the parent body and had a brief existence on their own. Neither apparently reached the adolescent stage, although communications passed between the Glasgow Association and ourselves, and suggested terms of amalgamation were offered. These, however were unacceptable, and a point blank refusal of our overtures was received. This rebuff, however, was only temporary, and we succeeded in opening a branch in Glasgow in October, 1877. The refusal of the local society to join us was undoubtedly its last effort to maintain its independence, after which it quietly petered out. This organisation never appears to have obtained any hold on the Glasgow patternmakers. It was looked upon as a kind of inferior friendly society, being composed of elderly men, with a sprinkling of very young men. When they failed to come to terms with the U.K.P.M.A. it was decided to break up the society and divide the funds. An earlier attempt to form a society of our trade in Glasgow was made in 1863, about the time of the lock-out for the fifty-seven hours. A Committee was formed to draw up rules, which were submitted to a mass meeting of our trade which was held in Bell's Hotel, Trongate. A number of members of the Amalgamated Engineers interrupted the proceedings, and ultimately the meeting broke up in disorder. So we had two abortive meetings before we succeeded in establishing our organisation on the banks of the Clyde.

In spite of the most diligent search we have been unable to discover even a tradition of the institution, activities, or demise of the Belfast organisation.

ASSOCIATED PATTERNMAKERS OF SCOTLAND.

We are on absolutely sure ground in making a brief reference to the strongest sectional society of patternmakers which existed outside our own organisation, as we were concerned in its birth, work, and absorption. The members

of this society were confined almost wholly to the Falkirk district and were engaged in what is known as the light casting trade, which was also represented to a small extent in Glasgow, Manchester, Leeds, Warrington, Luton, and London. Production was chiefly for builders' requisites, and the material used by the members of our trade was wood, plaster of Paris (stucco), tin, lead, etc. Although our seat of government was situated in Glasgow from 1884 to 1891, no effort was made to organise these men, and there was undoubtedly a strong prejudice against admitting them to membership, not so much that they might become a financial burden as that once they were members of our organisation no restriction could be placed upon the branch of trade they elected to follow, and that the purely engineering patternmaker would probably be undercut and eventually swamped by those who were willing to make substantial sacrifices in order to obtain an insight and footing in our trade. The whole light casting trade was very badly organised at the time, and wages and general working conditions were consequently unfavourable. Occasionally one of our members penetrated the fortresses of Falkirk, but almost invariably he returned as soon as he could get a job at his own branch of the trade. So the patternmakers in the light casting trade were left pretty much to their own devices.

In the early part of 1896 the local Trades Council initiated a strong organising movement, and representatives of national craftsmen's unions were invited to address meetings of their local unorganised fellow workmen. We accepted the offer of the Trades Council to arrange a meeting, and a speaker was sent from Manchester, who was accompanied by a few members from Glasgow. The meeting was poorly attended, but the audience seemed quite favourable to its objects. However, when names were called for and proposition money requested, the canny Scots elected to go slow. Quite a number of prospective candidates must be interviewed, and anyhow it would be as well if a fair proportion of the trade made the plunge. This was quite reasonable, but the result was that the seed sown brought forth quite a decent crop, who decided to confine the application of their newly-acquired principles to their own district, and on 2nd September, 1896, the new organisation was instituted with a total membership

of sixty-nine. Our rules, so far as constitution and administration were concerned, were laid under somewhat heavy toll, but the benefits were curtailed, Sick Benefit being eliminated, as most of the members of the new society considered themselves as being fully covered by their membership of friendly societies. Contributions were fixed at 6d. per week, and a subsidiary levy of 3d. per quarter was imposed. A rather curious arrangement was made with regard to Tool Insurance, the society effecting a voluntary benefit through the Co-operative Insurance Society, Manchester. This arrangement was only temporary, as two or three years afterwards they established their own Insurance Fund. The relationship between our society and our Falkirk contemporaries was, if somewhat intermittent, cordial enough, and an interchange of reports kept each organisation acquainted with the other's activities.

In February, 1906, the question of the eligibility of metal patternmakers to membership in our society was definitely raised. The E.C. broadened the question to include patternmakers engaged in metal, tin, lead, and plaster, and asked information from the branches as to the numbers and working conditions of the men engaged in this branch of our trade. Replies were received from five branches, from which it appeared that outside Falkirk very few members of our trade were engaged in actual patternmaking in these materials, and that a certain proportion were employed on semi-skilled work connected with metal. It was then intimated that we could adhere to our former policy and restrict our membership to those possessing the skill and tools necessary to produce engineering patterns. This ruling did not prevent negotiations being opened up between the two societies for amalgamation, as in June, 1908, a meeting of the Scottish organisation was addressed by representatives of our society, the result of which was that the latter body decided to take a vote with a view to making a formal application for fusion. This vote showed an overwhelming majority in favour, 136 being in favour, 26 against, with six spoiled votes, the total membership being 215 at the time, and as the law prescribed a two-thirds majority of the total membership as being necessary before any amalgamation could take place, the proposal was lost by the narrow majority of seven votes.

With so emphatically indicated a desire to amalgamate, such as was shown by the foregoing vote, it was inevitable that a further attempt should be made to give effect to the desires of the Associated Society.

The National Insurance Act, which came into operation in 1912, furnished an additional stimulus to another effort, and in May of that year a vote on a different issue, but having the same effect, was taken, and by 169 votes to 35, with five spoiled papers, it was decided to dissolve the Scottish Society, cancel its registration, and become a part of our organisation as from 20th June, 1912. No vote was taken in our society. It was realised that under no circumstances or upon any issue would it be possible to obtain a two-thirds vote of our total membership, and when the affiliated body was de-registered an agreement was prepared and signed in the following terms:—

“ Memorandum of agreement between the E.C. of the United Patternmakers' Association acting for and on behalf of that organisation and the E.C. of the Associated Patternmakers of Scotland acting in accordance with a ballot vote of the members of that society rendered on Saturday, 11th May, 1912, when, by 169 to 35 votes, it was decided to dissolve the aforesaid Associated Patternmakers of Scotland.

“ The E.C. of the Associated Patternmakers of Scotland agree to, and have made formal application, to join the United Patternmakers' Association on the following terms, which have been agreed to by the latter organisation:—

“ That they accept the rules of the U.P.M.A. in their entirety, and agree to conform to such future alterations of rules as may be made in accordance with the provisions of the said rules for effecting a complete or partial alteration of rules.

“ That members of the Associated Patternmakers of Scotland shall be placed in the same relative position in the United Patternmakers' Association as they would have occupied had they joined the latter society at the time they joined their present organisation.

“ That all assets belonging to the Associated Pattern-makers of Scotland, including investments, cash at bank and in hand, stationery, furniture, and other effects become the property of the U.P.M.A., and shall be at the disposal of the E.C. of the latter organisation.

“ That the Associated Patternmakers of Scotland shall henceforth be known as No. 89 Branch, Falkirk, of the United Patternmakers’ Association.

“ That this agreement shall become operative on and from 19th June, 1912.

“ For the United Patternmakers’ Association—

“ JOHN MILLS, E.C., President.

FRED THORNLEY.

HARRY TAYLOR.

ALBERT CROMPTON.

GEORGE HODGKINSON.

WILLIAM WATKINSON.

WILLIAM MOSSES, General Secretary.

“ For the Associated Patternmakers of Scotland—

“ ROBERT NEWLANDS, E.C., President.

WILLIAM BRUCE.

DANIEL NEILSON.

WILLIAM N. ALLAN.

JOHN MACDONALD.

ROBERT ABERCROMBIE.

JOHN WALKER, Secretary.”

During the sixteen years of its existence the Associated Society fully justified its position. Its greatest success was the organisation of the trade. The consequent advantages it secured were increases in wages, improved conditions for young journeymen, and, in conjunction with other trades, a reduction of hours from fifty-seven to fifty-four per week. They did not come to us empty-handed. With a membership of 260, their accumulated funds reached the substantial sum of £1,142, or £4 8s. per member, which, naturally, was considerably below the average amount held by our society, which at the time of the fusion amounted to £7 8s. 9d. Any misgivings as to the desirability of accepting patternmakers connected with the light casting trade have long ago been dispelled, if ever they were seriously entertained. When

we got to know them better we found they were equipped with the tools of which many of our members were of opinion we had a monopoly, and what is more, they were fully qualified to use them just as skilfully as were the general run of our membership. They have amply fulfilled the high anticipations we entertained of them ten years ago, and are now numbered amongst the most useful and loyal members of our organisation.

UNITED KINGDOM PATTERNAKERS' ASSOCIATION.

GENERAL.

Our society was instituted during the turbulent period which followed the nine hours' strike on the Tyne and Wear in 1871. The engineering industry was not particularly well organised at that time, which makes the success of the shorter hours movement all the more remarkable and satisfactory. Our trade had been neglected not only by the general body of union workmen, but by those who were organised in mixed societies, and it is highly probable that our section was the worst organised in the entire industry. This circumstance, however, did not prevent the great majority of patternmakers from throwing in their lot with the strikers, and they were dependent upon the goodwill of a Strike Committee, upon which our trade had no representation, for any financial support the latter body saw fit to give them. It is a well-known fact, quite applicable to the present time, that non-unionists who are "brought" out on strike are never satisfied with the doles they receive, and in spite of the natural jubilation which followed a strike, which lasted on the Tyne for twenty-six weeks and the results of which were standardised throughout England and Wales, considerable discontent existed amongst the members of our trade because of the scurvy treatment which they considered they had been subjected to. Added to this, quite a number of patternmakers were wood and iron men, who had elected to follow our trade, and as millwrights had been in receipt of 1s. 6d. per week above the supposedly standard rate, and which was known as dirty money—a most ridiculous and anomalous distinction. This extra payment, which was by no means general, disappeared when the hours settlement was effected, and there did not appear to be any union member of our trade with

sufficient force of character and perseverance to insist upon its retention. There was no recognised differential rate of wages as between our trade and the other sections of the industry. As a matter of fact, patternmakers were paid less than fitters, turners, blacksmiths, and other skilled mechanics. This was due largely to the free admission of any woodworker to our craft who was wishful to penetrate its mysteries. These interlopers, many of whom subsequently became amongst the best of our members and the most competent of our trade, were willing to pay for their newly-acquired knowledge by working for any money the employers thought fit to pay them, and it was stated with abundant proof of credibility that quite a number supplemented their concessions to their employers by a trifle of judicious blackmail to their foremen.

The general condition of trade was very good. The Franco-German war had just terminated, and as the exhaustion of both countries removed two dangerous competitors from our path, we had a virtual monopoly of the world's markets so far as engineering and shipbuilding were concerned. All these circumstances created an atmosphere eminently suitable to the launching of an industrial organisation in a trade which was just beginning to realise its indispensibility and which laboured under certain grievances peculiar to itself, and had, moreover, the advantage of being in a position to profit by the experiences and particularly the mistakes of its contemporaries. Nevertheless, the venture was a bold and uncertain one. As a general rule, the institution of a trade organisation has only two obstacles to overcome—the apathy and indifference of the people who seek to benefit, and the hostility, open or overt, of the employers, with whom they will inevitably be brought into conflict. In the case of our society, we had the first in full measure. We cannot say we had the second, as we were too insignificant and sectional to attract the attention of the employers, but we certainly had to contend with the open hostility of those societies who had been supposedly organising our trade since it was a trade, and upon whose preserves we were undoubtedly poaching.

However, there were a handful of men who were fully prepared to take all risks, and having concluded that a society

for patternmakers was essential in the interests of the trade, they set to work by personal canvass and by correspondence to interest those of our trade who were most likely to promote the institution of the embryo organisation. A few simple rules were blocked out—generally on sandpaper, and in the shop—and circulated, and gradually the somewhat nebulous ideas of these propagandists assumed a definite outline, and steps were taken to give effect to the projected venture. These preliminaries had been proceedings on the Tyne and Wear, and although our pioneers had been kept acquainted with the intentions of each, no co-ordinated scheme had been arranged for concerted and simultaneous action. The first plunge was taken at Sunderland on 11th March, 1872, when twenty-seven members were admitted to the new organisation. They were closely followed by Newcastle, who held their first meeting in Gateshead, at the Black Bull, Windmill Hill. There was a poor attendance, only fifteen being present. They all enrolled, and the only business they appeared to have transacted was the imposition of a levy for working expenses. The next meeting was a much livelier affair, there being quite a competition for office. The first General Secretary was Mr. R. C. Douglas, a local foreman, who, however, only held office for a few months, his resignation following his acceptance of a position in South America. He was succeeded by Mr. R. Reay, who was deprived of his position in 1884.

Although our society was established in Sunderland, the members there appeared to have made no claim to the seat of government. They, of course, were granted the senior position in our list of branches, and in our first Annual Report they figure as No. 1 Branch, a position accorded to Leeds when they affiliated in 1873.

It is unfortunate that no copy of our first code of rules can be found, and a diligent search of such of our earlier records as are available has failed to indicate that we had a printed form of rules. The only reference we have that a code of sorts existed is to be found in the title page of our first registered rules (11th September, 1874), in which it is stated that the registered copy was a revised and altered code which evidently had been in existence since the institution of our society.

The rules themselves are a modest little booklet of forty-eight pages, and evidently scissors and paste had entered largely into their composition. It speaks volumes for the prescience of those who were responsible for them when it is found that almost without exception they are embodied in our present code of rules—in many cases in the precise terms adopted forty-eight years ago. The preamble is a very modest affair, simply an indication of our benefits and administration and an exhortation for all to assist in the progress of the organisation. Rather remarkable was the address of the Registered Office, which was situated in the Cattle Market Inn.

The methods of opening branches, the number, titles, proportion and election of branch officers were identical with our present practice, the only change being in the salaries, which half a century ago were fixed on a very modest scale, when members and officers alike were not ashamed or unwilling to work for their love and devotion to the cause. The Central Management was, however, somewhat different to what we have been accustomed, and it is improbable that a single member of our last Revision of Rules Delegate Meeting realised that when a National Executive was decided upon they were reverting to a system which existed at the commencement of our society. So if antiquity is a justification for the resumption of an ancient practice, they were quite justified in the drastic change they made in their methods of administration.

Our first registered rules provided that the general business of the society be conducted by an Executive Council consisting of one representative from each branch having under fifty members, two representatives for branches with over fifty and less than a hundred members, and three for branches over that number. The limit was fixed at eleven representatives, when arrangements were made for the alternate representation of small branches. The qualification and duties of the Executive Council were almost identical with those of the present Executive, except that the meetings were intermittent, only two or three being held during the year, although the rules provided for a quarterly meeting, whilst in an emergency the officers could summon a special meeting. The remuneration of our chief administrative body was fixed at a very

modest figure : 1s. per attendance was paid to those members residing within two miles of the place of meeting ; such as had to travel a longer distance received second-class fare in addition, and for day meetings 6s. expenses was paid. What the term " expenses " covered and how much was allowed is left to conjecture, but these extra allowances cannot have amounted to much, as the total cost of a two-day meeting of nineteen delegates in 1876 amounted to £43 6s., of which £10 9s. 7d. was paid for dinners, teas, breakfasts, and beds, it being the custom at that time for the society to foot the bill for everything except the 6s. per day allowance and any additional expenses justifiably incurred.

No provision was made in the rules for the appointment of a Sub-Committee to carry on the business of the General Office in the long intervals between Executive Council meetings, but during 1873 there was a delegation of authority to a Sub-Committee of five members appointed from the Newcastle Branch, and which was subsequently designated the Executive Council Committee, or E.C.C. This latter body was regularised when the rules were revised in 1876, and although the rule relating to a National Executive Council was retained in the latter code of rules, they were never called upon after that year on account of the expense which, with the geographical extension of the society and the consequent increase in their numbers, would have made their use a very serious financial burden.

Reverting to our first printed code of registered rules (1874), we find that the rule relating to the admission of new members was almost identical with our present code. Entrance fees of ordinary members were as at present : 5s. was the minimum to candidates 21 years of age, and £2 to those 40 years old, that age being then, as now, the limit. There was no provision of special fees or an extended age limit to re-entrants, but half-members were admitted from 18 years of age, and half benefits paid ; when 20 years of age the half-member could qualify for full membership by paying full contributions for fourteen weeks. No member under 21 years of age could vote upon any question or hold any office in the society.

That our pioneer members counted upon increasing their numbers by proselytising is evidenced by the " poaching "

rule, which allowed members of other societies to qualify for immediate benefits by paying 1s. per week for twelve months. As an additional inducement they were admitted at the lowest scale of entrance. Apart from the ethics of this policy, poaching was certainly a necessity in the newly instituted organisation. We were extending in the well-organised districts of Lancashire and the Midlands, and it was only by giving special inducements to organised patternmakers that we were able to obtain a foothold in the fresh fields we sought to exploit, and it was due to the experience and stability of our recruits from other societies that the success of our efforts in these districts was rendered possible.

Our first weekly contribution was fixed at 8d., and the rules relating to payments, penalties, etc., were very much the same as now. The first important benefit was, as at present, Out-of-Work Donation, which was fixed after twelve months' membership at 10s. per week for twelve weeks, 7s. per week for twelve weeks, and 5s. per week for the same period, with exemption from contribution during the remainder of unemployment. A curious misprint occurs in the rules, which states that any member receiving short Donation of "three" shillings per week shall not receive full Donation until he has worked four weeks at the trade, etc. The "three" evidently should be "five," the rule being in accord with our subsequent practice.

Our last revision of rules has probably unconsciously reimposed a continuous Sick Benefit, although on a much more generous scale than was granted forty-eight years ago. At that time we paid after six months' membership 10s. per week for twenty-six weeks, 5s. per week for twenty-six weeks, and 2s. 6d. per week during the remainder of illness. It was evident, however, that the society was apprehensive of the result of a continuous benefit, as they abolished it at the next revision in 1876.

Funeral Benefit was fixed at £13, £5 of which could be claimed on the death of a member's wife, and it says something for the prescience of our pioneer members that this scale of benefit remained unaltered for years after its institution.

All the restrictions and regulations governing the payment of the foregoing benefits were practically identical with our present practice.

An exception, however, must be recorded with regard to Tool Benefit, which was voluntary in our early days. The limit of benefit was fixed at £5, and an entry fee of 6d. was charged, together with a contribution of 1d. per month, and provision was made for a levy on all registered members—this if income was inadequate to meet the claims on this fund. The support vouchsafed to the Tool Fund, however, was very meagre. The General Secretary lamented that during and up to 1874 this fund had been practically a dead letter, and as a result of that lament, during the following year 1s. was levied as the income for Tool Insurance. It is little wonder that at the 1876 revision it was decided to make the payment to this fund compulsory. The benefit was raised to £10, with a minimum of 10s., and the contribution was fixed at 6d. per annum, since which time this fund has grown and prospered amazingly.

Another voluntary fund was that relating to Superannuation Benefit. The subscription was fixed at 1d. per week, for which modest sum 7s. per week was promised after twenty years' membership, and 9s. per week after twenty-five years. Even more generous terms were to be had for the asking, as by paying 2d. per week a member shortened his qualifying period by the number of extra weeks contributions he paid, with the restriction that he could not date back further than his 21st birthday, or than December, 1868. As there was no qualifying restriction of age, a member 31 years of age could, by paying ten years' double contributions, qualify for the benefit when he was 41 years of age. The reason for these extraordinary privileges is obvious. Our society was in its infancy; if it continued it had to get new members by hook or by crook, and it was easy to promise a benefit which could not mature for ten, twenty, or thirty-five years. The members of our craft were sadly lacking in perspicuity at this period, as only about one-third contributed to this fund, of whom a very small proportion paid double superannuation contributions, and, needless to say, we duly honoured the obligations we entered into with those members who adventured 1d. or

2d. contribution for what proved in several instances a young-age pension. This rule was made obligatory at the 1876 revision.

The remaining rules of the 1874 code do not call for special comment. It may be noted, however, that even in these early days we admitted honorary members, but, rather curiously, there was no direct stipulation that this grade of membership should be confined to members of our craft, except a rather obscure reference to the rule relating to the admission of members. However, so far as can be ascertained, no outsiders ever sought admission, and the rule was evidently intended to benefit patternmakers between 40 and 50 years of age, of whom very few indeed joined, although any free member was allowed to transfer. The entrance fee to new entrants was £1, the contributions 3½d. per week, and Funeral Benefit only was paid.

The foregoing epitome of our first printed constitution is given as an introduction to our activities during its currency, and this plan will, so far as is practicable, be followed throughout our narrative; in other words, our history will be divided into periods, marked by our various alterations of rules, and each period will be prefaced by a statement of the chief alterations of rules which mark its commencement, so that members may have an idea of our constitution during the period under review.

History of the Society.

1872.

Our progress during the first year of our existence was slow, considering the material we had to work on, and exceedingly rocky. We have it on indubitable authority that after a few months the infant organisation was pronounced no good by a number of thirsty recruits, and they actually succeeded in passing a resolution winding up the Newcastle Branch and dividing the funds. They were so elated with their success that an exodus of the iconoclasts took place to the bar downstairs, where the victory was duly celebrated and the division of the spoils anticipated. Their eagerness, however, led to their undoing, as the then President of the society, carefully watching his opportunity, put his back against the door, refused both ingress and egress from the meeting, and succeeded in passing a resolution rescinding the winding-up order, much to the chagrin of his brethren downstairs. Had the wrecking plot succeeded we would not have been utterly annihilated, as we had a foothold in Sunderland, Stockton, and South Shields, and it is inconceivable that even with a division of the Newcastle funds the seeds of Trade Unionism could have been destroyed. But this incident is given as an example of the difficulties our pioneer members had to contend with from the weak-kneed amongst their own ranks.

Our first published accounts were for the first twelve months of our existence—from April, 1872, to April, 1873, when we had six branches with 173 members, twenty-eight of whom had been admitted in the last four months of the year, the total balance standing at £98. During this short period no fewer than thirty-three members were excluded. The number of our branches was five; the sixth, Middlesbrough, seems to have petered out as soon as it was instituted; it never got so far as to furnish a report of any kind.

As may be conjectured, our financial operations were on an exceedingly modest scale. No entrance fees appear to have

been charged to the original members, or, for the matter of that, to many of the entrants during our first year, as only 12s. 6d. appears under the head of propositions, and £3 17s. 6d. as entrance fees. It is probable that each branch exercised its own discretion in regard to this matter. The most interesting item in our first year's expenditure is a sum of £9 2s. 8d. remitted to a Birkenhead engineers' strike. There is no indication as to what they were striking for. The Newcastle Branch raised the major part of that amount by a levy, and the residue appears to have been advanced from the General Funds. But the item itself is interesting as an indication that even in those early days our society could find a little to spare from their own meagre resources for a cause in which they evidently sympathised.

It is to be noted that six Council meetings cost £3 19s. 6d., whilst the General Secretary was passing rich on £8 per year. We paid our first benefit during this year, £14 3s. 4d. being paid to four members as Sick Benefit, and our total expenditure amounted to £95 1s. 11½d., the odd farthing appearing in the item "Delegation."

It is pleasing to record that during the first year of our existence patternmakers' wages increased by 15 per cent. It is not claimed, however, that this improvement was due to any influence exercised by the infant society over the conditions of employment of its members.

1873.

The chief event during 1873 was the amalgamation of the Leeds Society, although their absorption was not fully consummated until the following year. They were accompanied by branches at Bradford and Halifax. The latter branch did not survive the first year of its affiliation, and its place was temporarily occupied by Middlesbrough, whose resurrection, however, did not last for more than a few years. The amalgamation with the Leeds Society was an immense advantage to the struggling parent body. Hitherto it had been a local organisation confined to a small area on the North-East Coast. Its title showed a determination to extend on a national basis, and this fusion was undoubtedly the first step toward the realisation of that ideal. Added to the moral effect of the amalgamation, there was the solid advantage of

the addition of ninety-five members and £263 to the resources of the society.

During the year we paid our first Trade Donation. It is interesting to note that the Leeds Branch sent a delegate to the Trades Union Congress and made a grant of £2 to the Parliamentary Committee. This delegation was undertaken before the fusion.

Discipline and central control of the funds appear to have been fairly strict. We note the Newcastle Branch remitted 19s. to the local Trades Council, and helped a "Soiree Committee" to the tune of £10 5s. 7d., both of which amounts, they had to refund by levy. Considerable importance was attached to the yearly equalisation of funds held by the branches. Judging by our present standards, the amounts were insignificant. The first remittance between branches amounted to £13, and the second to £4, although our recent practice was anticipated as far back as 1873, when each branch was required to square their funds by remitting their surplus to the Executive Council, the total amount being £18 7s.

Apart from the accession of the Leeds Society, progress had been conspicuous by its absence, our membership having decreased by nine. The year's exclusions numbered nineteen, being over 11 per cent. of our total membership. There does not appear to have been any incident worthy of note during 1873, except what has already been dealt with.

1874.

The association began to feel its feet during 1874, its record being one of slow but steady progress. Trade was good, which, curiously enough, is blamed for the paucity of our admissions. The chief inducement to new entrants was Unemployment Benefit, and with practically full work for everyone, there appeared no reason to pay a weekly contribution to ensure a benefit which would never be needed! Still, the society extended its activities to the Sheffield and Birmingham areas, and actually managed to gain a foothold in Scotland by the establishment of the Dundee Branch. The membership increased by ninety-nine, in spite of twenty-eight exclusions, and the total balance was augmented by a gain of £156 to £557, or £1 11s. 2d. per member.

During this year the General Office was removed from the public-house which had sheltered it during its infancy to the General Secretary's residence in Trafalgar Street, Newcastle.

1875.

During 1875 the society succeeded in opening branches in one of the strongholds of the Amalgamated Engineers—Manchester and Bolton—and this circumstance was responsible for our first tussle with that organisation. As has already been stated, the E.C. of the A.S.E. devoted a considerable portion of their monthly report to a solemn warning to their patternmakers, the burden of which was that they could not serve under two flags, a quite proper and justifiable statement. It, however, served the purpose of admitting of a rejoinder, which, it is safe to assume, our propagandists used for all they were worth. From a purely pamphleteering point of view our Executive certainly displayed excellent judgment. We had opened a branch in Manchester partly recruited from the A.S.E. That body had just launched a wages movement on behalf of our trade for a 2s. advance, raising the minimum rate to 38s. Fifteen shops had granted the advance when we appeared on the scene, and the A.S.E. District Committee, anxious to safeguard their success and desirous of completing the movement, approached our local branch with a view to a consolidation of their position. We could do no less than give an undertaking that it was and always would be the policy of our society to work in harmony with other trade societies in any action that would conform with their dignity and honour as a trade society. "That we confer with the A.S.E. local district secretary with regard to the shops in which the advance had not been granted, and that we assist in the preparation of a list of shops giving rates of wages." This undertaking was not only necessary, but it was inevitable. The only cause for complaint was one which has been certainly sanctified by invariable usage: That the A.S.E. had determined its policy and carried it into effect before they consulted us, and, in fact, that we were called in as an acquiescing rather than a deliberative body.

However, our magnanimity and sterling principles in Manchester were held to have had a very poor requital, when what was termed an "attack" upon our society was made

from the General Office of the A.S.E. As a matter of fact, we should have been devoutly thankful to that body for affording us an opportunity of offering our first comparative statement emphasising the advantages to the members of our trade by throwing in their lot with a society devoted solely to the interests of our trade. The statement of our case is exceedingly well done; no rancour or personality, but a well reasoned declaration of faith, which must have had the effect of confirming our members in their choice of a society, even if it did not attract many recruits from our contemporaries.

The A.S.E. complained of the proselytising policy of the U.K.P.M.A., but for which they would never have said one word against it. Our rejoinder was, that we had to contend against the strongest opposition of the A.S.E. from our institution, and it would have become them much better had they rendered the new organisation all the help possible. We did not deny their complaint of poaching.

The A.S.E. very naturally asserted that history showed sectional societies to be a mistake, and held that the then tendency was toward a closer amalgamation of the various sectional societies in the engineering trade. We countered by pointing out the number of successful sectional societies in that industry, and held that as turners and erectors admittedly knew nothing of the special conditions attaching to boilermakers, iron founders, and the like, they were equally ignorant with regard to our trade, and the fact that patternmakers in the A.S.E. were forming themselves into Mutual Aids was conclusive proof that this principle was admitted even by that organisation.

The A.S.E. then roundly denounced as selfish the minority trades who were better employed than the general body, and who considered that they did not receive full value for their contributions. This gave an opening, which was followed up to its fullest extent. We emphatically asserted that in a mixed society the interests of an isolated minority were and must be neglected. We agreed that the demand for our labour was much greater than in other sections of the engineering trade, and rubbed in what was really the crux of the whole question, that we were able to run our society upon a much lower rate of contribution than the A.S.E., and that our 8d. per week went as far as the 1s. per week paid by the

members of the latter society. As an example, it was pointed out that whilst in 1874 Trade Benefit cost the A.S.E. 9s. 1½d. per member, the cost to us amounted to 1s. 5½d. Our pamphlet wound up with a vigorous protest at what was termed an entirely uncalled-for attack upon a society which had entered the field with a fair and legitimate programme.

All this petty bickering and recrimination may appear futile and paltry, judging from the perspective of nearly half-a-century, but it is questionable if we have made much progress in that tolerance, self-effacement, and solidarity which are essential to the real interests of present-day industrialism. At all events, our first tilt against our big brothers is worthy of record. It was the precursor of many such, and it had undoubtedly a stimulating and strengthening effect upon the young organisation, which was desperately striving for a foothold in the Trade Union movement.

Our chief success during the year under review was the extension of our society to Lancashire. At the end of the year we had added three branches to our roll, making the total sixteen. Our membership reached 418, a gain of fifty-nine. Exclusions were still numerous, thirty-six members having lapsed. Our total income amounted to £649; expenditure, £399, and our balance reached the quite satisfactory sum of £807, or £1 18s. 7d. per member.

It may be noted that during the year the attempt to amalgamate with the London patternmakers was made, but that organisation was crumbling to pieces at the time from the causes already stated, and they evidently could not make up their minds to join us as a body. We also made an attempt to open a branch in Glasgow, a deputation proceeding to that city, where a three days campaign was carried on. Their efforts were for a time abortive, as they neither succeeded in opening a branch of our society nor of coming to an understanding with the existing local society. However, their hopes were only deferred, as the Glasgow organisation disappeared shortly afterwards, leaving no trace, and our society became established in that district shortly after the visit of our delegates.

Altogether, 1875 may be regarded as a most successful year, considering the uphill fight that the young society was

engaged in against the many and varied elements which sought either actively or passively to retard its progress.

During this year a somewhat complicated element was introduced into our system of bookkeeping. Our contribution of 8d. per week had been divided into three parts, viz.: 4d. for Sick and Funeral Benefit, 3d. for Trade, and 1d. for Management. But prior to 1875 a simple profit and loss account was rendered. During that year, however, a general statement was given by each branch showing the income, expenditure, and gain or loss of each separate fund. As time went on, these figures were enormously inflated owing to the remittances from branch to branch being included in this statement, with the result that the record of gain or loss in each branch bore little or no relationship to the financial results of that branch. The system was complicated and misleading, and it was little wonder that failure to balance was adjusted by unaccounted-for gains and deficiencies which were purely bookkeeping errors. Ultimately, the branch general statements were quietly abolished, the account of income and expenditure with which our members are familiar being retained.

1876.

The most important event of 1876 was a general revision of rules, the vote in favour being 103 against 45. A Delegate Meeting was held in Newcastle on 10th and 11th October, which was attended by sixteen delegates, together with the President and General Secretary. The revision was completed at Leeds by a Sub-Committee of six, who met November 21st, 22nd, and 23rd, the branches having sent in amendments to the existing rules, which were dealt with in the manner indicated. No indecent haste was shown in their application and issue, and some of our impatient members will be interested to learn that whilst the revision was completed in November, 1876, the rules were not registered until 12th January, 1878.

Some important alterations to our constitution were effected at this revision, not the least important being the adoption of a motto, which has stood the stress and criticism of every subsequent alteration of rules to date, and there is little doubt but that "One heart, one way," which has the merit of

being original and embodies a sentiment which is an excellent ideal and should be honoured in the observance, will serve our turn so long as we preserve our special identity.

The preface of a Trade Union code of rules usually offers an opportunity for an ebullition of flamboyant rhetoric, which is too good to be ignored, and the difference between precept and practice is nowhere more clearly seen than in the preface of an industrial organisation. We have probably been as great sinners in this respect as have our contemporaries, and whilst our first "preamble" was a modest catalogue of our benefits and methods, with a mild exhortation of individual responsibilities toward the infant organisation, the succeeding preface, fortified with the inspiration of a brand new motto, boldly assails the principles of individualism, advocates the responsibilities of the fortunate employed workman toward his fellow, who, either because of circumstance or lack of opportunity, is not so well placed, emphasises the variety and scope of our benefits, and finishes up with a stirring invitation to all connected with our "branch of business" to come over and participate in the moral and material benefits laid down in "this book of rules."

The 1876 alteration of rules established an office separate from the General Secretary's residence at 7, Grainger Street, Newcastle-on-Tyne. No noticeable alteration was made in the appointment and duties of branch officers or of the general administration of the branches. For the first time provision was made for the appointment of an Executive Committee as distinct from the Executive Council. This latter body was continued, but its basis of representation was altered so as to restrict its members. Branches with from thirty to a hundred members were allowed one representative; over that number, two representatives were allowed, that number being the limit; whilst branches with under thirty members were grouped.

Meetings had to be called by a vote of the society, and were not to be held twice successively in the same place. As a matter of fact, the comprehensive if somewhat obscure rules relating to our chief governing authority were rendered unnecessary because of the circumstance that no meetings

of that body were ever held after the statutory institution of an Executive Committee. This body consisted of five members, who were nominated by the branch where the seat of Government was held, and who, together with the President, were elected by the society at the yearly December meetings.

The office of General Secretary was open to the nomination of all branches, and he held office for two years. At this time he received an advance of salary of 100 per cent., from £8 to £16 per annum. The duties of the E.C. were practically identical with those in our current code of rules, and the locality of the seat of Government was determinable every three years instead of one year, as in the previous rule book.

The privilege accorded to entrants into new branches, which, under the first registered rules, was, that all new members up to the age of forty could join at the lowest scale of entrance, was somewhat altered under the 1876 revision, when 5s. was fixed as the entrance fee up to 35 years of age, 10s. from 35 to 40 years, and 20s. from 40 to 45 years. This reduced entrance was limited to a period of three months, and the age limit of all new members was raised from 40 to 45 years.

Contributions were raised from 8d. to 9d. per week, apportioned as follows: 4d. Sick and Funeral, 3d. Trade, 1d. for Superannuation, and 1d. Management. No alteration was made in the scale of Trade Donation, but a very important alteration was made in regard to Sick Benefit. The major scale, 10s. for twenty-six weeks, was retained, but the 5s. second scale for the same period was advanced to 6s., and the continuous scale of 2s. 6d. was abolished altogether, exemption from contributions during remainder of illness being retained. This is one of the rare instances in which benefits have been reduced in this or in any trade society, the general tendency being in the other direction.

Tool Insurance, which, being optional, had been a dead letter, was made compulsory, a levy of 6d. per member per year being considered an adequate contribution to this fund. Superannuation had also been voluntary, but had been contributed to on the basis of 1d. per week by about two-thirds of our members. It was now made compulsory, benefit at 7s.

per week being paid for twenty years' membership, and 9s. for twenty-five years. Other privileges accorded to members in respect of this fund have been already recorded. It is interesting to note that it was specially provided that superannuation was promised irrespective of any private means the member might be possessed of, even if it were from a trade or calling unconnected with the society (? trade), and no inquiry was to be made concerning a member's private income, a rule which was withdrawn in 1912 and partially reinstituted in 1919.

A rather curious rule was introduced into our 1876 code, which, so far as we are aware, has no parallel in either our own or any other Trade Union. It allows four over-age candidates to be admitted as full members. It is evident that some special reasons existed at the time to justify so glaring a violation of the rules, and the wonder is that the Registrar allowed this rule to remain.

The year 1876 appears to be the first year during which a printed Monthly Report was issued. Our first code of rules provided that the branch secretary wrote to the General Secretary not later than the second day of each month, reporting the state of trade, numbers out of work and in receipt of benefit; and the latter officer had to "make out and issue a monthly report stating the condition of trade in each town, as received from each branch secretary." There appeared to be no obligation to issue a printed report, although the rule regarding the issue of a Quarterly and Yearly Report was most explicit, and was strictly observed, so far as the Yearly Report was concerned. The monthly statement was probably confined to a written statement, or, more probably still, the rule was ignored altogether. However, during 1876 and before the alteration of rules was even voted upon, an attempt was made to issue a printed Monthly, the only specimen of which we have been able to trace is contained in the report of an Executive Council meeting held in Newcastle on 21st February, 1876. The report is for March, 1876, and is headed "Third Monthly Trade Report." The information given is somewhat meagre, but it appears that the condition of trade at that period was fair, notwithstanding a general depression in the engineering industry. It appears,

however, that some dissatisfaction had been expressed by some of the branches because of the non-issue of a Monthly Report. The matter was brought before the Executive Council, and "was ordered to be printed." But "ordering" is at all times an easy matter; execution may be much more difficult, and at that time we were not in affluent circumstances. Requests for E.C. levies were either ignored or were remitted only if the branch was of opinion that it could spare a little from its none too superfluous funds. Our credit was so bad that, owing the printers £23, we had not the cheek to ask them to increase our indebtedness by printing Monthly Reports which were hopelessly out of date, and as the printing and issue of a Monthly Report was dependent upon a readier response by the branches to the requests of the E.C. for money, the responsibility for its non-issue was placed upon the branches, whose tardy and insufficient remittances caused a financial deadlock at the General Office.

It is interesting to note that at the last Executive Council meeting held for many years an attempt at economy was frustrated. The delegates were allowed second-class fare, and by 2 votes to 10 it was decided to continue this payment. On the other hand, it was unanimously decided that it would be an unnecessary expense to send a delegate to the next Trades Union Congress.

A Printing Committee was appointed to supervise our printing, which amounted to £21 for the year. Birmingham was authorised to "adopt such measures as may be deemed advisable to establish a minimum rate of wages in the shops in that district." This appears to have been our first official attempt to enforce a minimum rate of wages in our trade, although we had acted in collaboration with the A.S.E. in maintaining their standard rates for patternmakers. It was also decided that a Leeds member, "who went on a joinering excursion be not allowed any expenses."

It was during this year that we succeeded in establishing ourselves in the London district by opening a branch in Erith, and the circumstances certainly did more credit to our zeal than to our principles. A strike took place at the principal firm, Erith Iron Works (better known as Easton and Andersons), against piecework. The dispute did not concern

us, but as the patternmakers were members of the A.S.E. they had, willy nilly, to come out with the general body. The strike was a failure, and the places of the strikers were soon filled, with the exception of our trade, where considerable difficulties were being experienced. Ultimately, a few of the older hands were induced to turn over from the A.S.E. and form a branch of our society, and they then formally declared the strike ended and returned to work. This incident long ago passed into oblivion, but was not forgotten by the A.S.E. for many years, and it gave our society a reputation which it took a long time to live down. As a matter of fact, this circumstance had most to do with the alteration of our name in 1884.

This year was the first occasion in which an effort was made to assist an injured member, apart from the benefit he was entitled to under our rules. The appeal was made on behalf of a Liverpool member for voluntary support, with the result that £7 10s. 9d. was collected from branches.

Trade was depressed during the year, but the infant society made steady progress during that period, and it is exultingly pointed out that many of the new entrants were amongst those who had found their interests neglected in a mixed society, and sought to improve their position by "casting off the old love and putting on the new." Six new branches were opened and 164 new members admitted, a net increase of 108 members, the total reaching 523.

The balance of income over expenditure reached the modest total of £108, which gave a total balance of £916, or £1 15s. per member. Management expenses were very heavy, amounting to £305, or 11s. 7d. per member, and the 1d. per week chargeable to each member's contributions was so utterly inadequate that the deficiency to this fund, even in these early days, amounted to £229.

During this year we made our first official pronouncement upon the vexed question of piece and contract work, when the E.C. took the opportunity in replying to an inquiry from Smethwick that such work should be avoided as much as possible, "as it is impossible to fix a log in connection with our business."

1877.

In dealing with the chief events of 1877 and succeeding years, we are on much surer ground than has hitherto been the case, as from January of that year we have a complete file of Monthly Reports.

Trade was in a rather depressed condition during this year, but that did not prevent the Birmingham Branch, which had been accorded permission to fix a minimum rate of wages by the Executive Council, from seeking to apply the same principle throughout the society. The E.C., however, recognised their limitations, and very rightly pointed out that without co-ordination amongst the branches in each district, added to which was the difficulty of delimiting the district, several different minimum rates might be fixed, and any member seeking to enforce that, or, in fact, any minimum, would probably find himself on the funds; and it was pointed out that the strongest societies were unable to prevent the open violation of their minimum rates in face of a falling market.

It was decided that the branches be asked to furnish returns of the number of hours worked and the rate per hour as a preliminary step to standardising the wage rates when a favourable opportunity presented itself. The returns from the branches were fairly complete, with the exception of Dundee, where the hours were fifty-one per week and the rate $6\frac{1}{2}$ d. per hour, and Ashton, where fifty-five hours were worked, and the rate was 8d.; the week was one of fifty-four hours, and the rate varied from 7d. in Leeds to $8\frac{3}{4}$ d. in Erith, the general average being $7\frac{1}{2}$ d. per hour.

An attempt was made during the year to place our Management Fund on a sound financial basis, the Smethwick Branch proposing "That no Executive Council meeting or delegation take place without a special vote of the society; also that a 3d. per quarter levy be imposed until the debt to this fund be wiped out, and that thereafter any further deficiency be made good by a further levy." These well-meant proposals were voted on and rejected. Executive Council meetings were already determinable by a vote of the members, and little as our members at that time liked deficiencies, they were even more opposed to levies.

For the first time in our history an official application was made from an outside society for assistance, the Nut and Bolt Makers, who were on strike or locked out, sending a deputation to the E.C. It is unfortunate that the sums realised were sent direct to the headquarters in Staffordshire, so we have no means of gauging the generosity of our members at that time.

An attempt was made during 1877 to revert to the ten-hour day by a firm of safe makers in Bolton, which met with the most determined resistance. We were not, however, directly concerned.

During the year under review we had our first taste of law. A member of the Leeds Branch suing us for £18 7s. 8d. Sick Benefit and Funeral Benefit for wife. We were successful in our plea that being a registered society we could not be sued for benefits, but, as a matter of equity, we were fully justified in refusing benefit to a member who was an adept at working the rules so as to be almost continuously on benefit. A second case was that of a member who defrauded the society at Smethwick and London. After being arrested a bond for the missing money was forthcoming, and "as the money was of more value to the society than putting him in prison the charge was withdrawn against him."

Considerable progress was made during this year in extending the area and membership of our society. Three branches were opened in Scotland, and the preliminaries for opening a branch in Belfast had been completed. The total number of our branches was twenty-five; membership had increased by 151 and reached the respectable total of 674. Our income had exceeded the four-figure mark, as also had our balance, which stood at £1,132, or £1 13s. 7½d. per member, a gain over the year of £216.

This was the last year of our voluntary Tool Fund, which, after five years, had a balance to its credit of £4 19s. 8½d., £3 of which had been amassed during the last year of its existence. It was fortunate that no claims had been made against this fund.

The Superannuation Fund had been much more successful. The voluntary contribution of 1d. per week had realised

£73 15s. 9½d. for its last year as a voluntary institution, when its total worth amounted to £208 8s. 0½d.

The outlook at the close of 1877 was decidedly gloomy. Trade was dull in general, although we had not been very badly hit, our unemployed expenditure having amounted to only £298, or 8s. 10½d. per member. But the industrial condition apparently gave rise to somewhat gloomy forebodings, as the members were warned to expect an attack on wages and hours, and whilst they were advised to act diplomatically with regard to wages, they were exhorted to resist to the uttermost any attempt at reversion to the ten-hour day.

1878.

The 1876 code of rules came into operation at the beginning of this year, the contribution being fixed at 9d. per week, Superannuation and Tool Benefit being compulsory. Nominations to the Executive Committee were to be made from the branch where the seat of government was situated (Newcastle), election to be by vote of the whole society. This vote was taken at the beginning of the year, with the curious result that, of seven candidates, the first five names were successful. As the names were not submitted alphabetically, but in order of nomination, the chances of a successful candidate depended solely upon the smartness of his proposer in the Newcastle Branch.

A considerable degree of sniping took place at both wages and hours about this time, chiefly in Middlesbrough, Sheffield, and Bolton. In every case we, in common with others concerned, offered resistance to the employers' demands, and in connection with these movements we had our first case of "acting contrary," one of our members leaving a job, taking the place of one of his striking brethren, and acting as mentor to some strike-breaking carpenters who wished an insight into our trade, and were not particular as to how they obtained an entry. We also had a case of supersession by a Trade Unionist, a member of the A.S.E. taking the place of one of our members who had been withdrawn from his situation.

The question of the General Secretary's salary was placed before the members, and proposals for an increase to £20, and

various sums up to £32 per annum were made. A further proposal to make the appointment a full-time one at 36s. per week was made. Ultimately, by a substantial majority, it was decided to raise the salary of the position from £16 to £20 per annum.

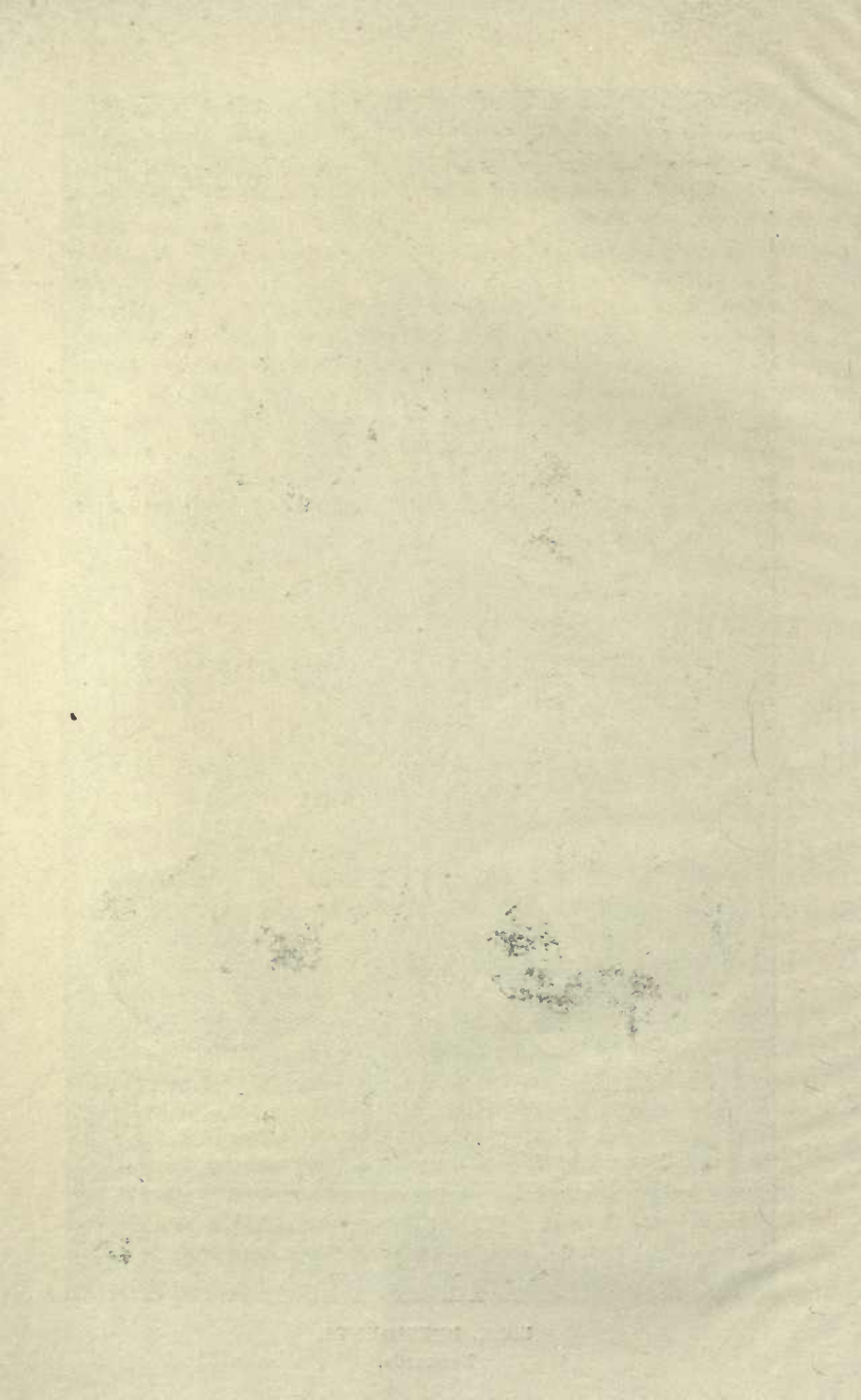
At the beginning of this year a Contingent or Benevolent Fund was raised by levy. This, so far as we can ascertain, is the first time a general levy was raised by vote. The amount was insignificant—3d. per member—but as there appeared to be urgent need for such a fund, a subsequent call was made for an additional 6d., both proposals being carried. The initial need for a fund outside the scope of our statutory benefits arose in Leeds, where a firm gave notice of a 3s. reduction. A strike took place, and the employers succeeded in filling the places of the strikers, who were offered 15s. per week as an inducement to stop working. Some of them apparently did so, the local members subscribing to keep these men from blacklegging. The amount raised was refunded to the members when the levy was carried. It is interesting to note that this firm were paying their new hands 26s. to 28s. per week, being a reduction of 6s. on the previous rates.

We appear to have been somewhat pugnacious at this time. We sued a Middlesbrough employer for a week's wages in lieu of notice for the wrongful dismissal of three of our members. They were on notice of a 10 per cent. reduction of wages, and being asked to work overtime they refused and were instantly dismissed. The case was dismissed without costs, because of a clause in the factory rules which gave the employer the right of immediate dismissal under certain circumstances, which covered the case of our trio of members.

The general attitude of the iron masters toward Trade Unionism is indicated in a manifesto issued to the employers in that industry and published in the Newcastle Press: The employers expressed their antagonism to recent industrial legislation and to Trade Unionism in general, and urged their members to take advantage of the then depressed state of trade "to enforce piecework, lengthen the hours of employment, and, where possible, put down Trade Unions." It was proposed that the future policy of the organisation



E.C.C. PRESIDENTS,
Newcastle.



be of an aggressive character, although it is admitted that the introduction of piecework can never be universal. A test of opinion as to the best means of reducing the cost of production by a reduction of wages or a lengthening of hours was unconvulsive so far as any public declaration was concerned, but an intimation was given that when a definite policy was agreed to the particulars would be communicated to the members of the organisation in a personal communication. It was strongly urged that all union foremen be discharged, on the ground that a society man could not render faithful service in a position of trust.

The institution of a free labour organisation was anticipated as far back as 1878 by the opening of a Free Register Office for employers and workmen in Manchester, which institution had enabled employers to reduce the average wage rate.

Opposition was offered to Mr. MacDonald's. (first Labour M.P.) Compensation Bill. The document concluded with a vigorous appeal to employers in the engineering trade in London to join the organisation and so share with their provincial contemporaries the duties of mutual self-defence. Altogether a most interesting and illuminating document, and quite worthy of perpetuation as indicating the sentiments and fears of employers toward the Trade Union Movement forty-three years ago.

The question of an emblem was raised during this year by Birmingham, which branch must have been in particularly optimistic mood when they made the suggestion, which was accompanied by a proposal that any surplus accruing from the sale be devoted to the Management Fund! The E.C. very prudently deferred action until they received a sufficient guarantee to ensure that the cost of designing and engraving the plate was covered. These were the days before lithography had cheapened the cost of these pictorial emblems of membership. Needless to say, nothing further was heard of the suggestion, and the society had soon enough to occupy their attention without troubling with emblems.

During the latter part of the year a dispute at Barrow afforded our members an opportunity of showing their mettle. A "tyrannical notice" was posted, which resulted in a

general strike. Our members stayed at their work until they had received authority to join in from their own Executive. In the meantime, they interviewed the manager, who agreed to take down the notice for three months. Whether this concession was wholly due to our representations we do not know, but anyhow it ended the dispute so far as we were concerned.

Toward the end of the year we experienced a premonition of what was to come in the way of depressed trade. The employers took advantage of the general conditions to issue notices for a reduction of wages and a lengthening of the working week. It is to the credit of the Trade Unionists of that day that they set their faces like a flint against any interference with the nine-hour day; but as a general rule, they bowed to the inevitable and accepted considerable cuts in wages as an alternative, and the employers accepted this concession as such, and, so far as can be ascertained, during the terrible time which was rapidly approaching no actual attempt was made to interfere with the hours of labour.

Considerable progress was made during this year, especially in Scotland. At the end of the year we had four branches in Glasgow, one in Greenock, and one in Coatbridge. As it was estimated at the time that there were 800 pattern-makers in Glasgow, of whom only 120 were members, it is evident that there was still abundant scope for further organising effort. We opened seven branches during the year, our total reaching thirty-two. Our membership increased by 170, giving us a total at the end of the year of 844. Exclusions were very heavy, numbering sixty-four.

For the first time in our seven years' experience our income was insufficient to meet our expenditure. The deficit only amounted to £40, but all the same it must have been a very discouraging portent. This deficiency was due to our abnormal expenditure on Trade Benefit, which amounted to £831, or 19s. 8½d. per member, nearly 150 per cent. more than we had ever paid before on this benefit. Sick Benefit fortunately showed a slight reduction, and a very welcome reduction per member was noticeable for cost of management. At the close of this year we had spent the quite respectable sum of £1,429, or £1 13s. 11¾d. per member, the largest amount spent since the institution of the society.

1879.

During a period covering twenty-two years, from our institution to 1894, the year 1879 stands out as the blackest in our experience. We have experienced worse depressions of trade and have spent proportionately more money in benefit, but we were better prepared, and had no difficulty in punctually discharging our obligations to our members. Fortunately, the most acute phase of the 1879 depression did not last long. It reached its lowest depths in February, when 162 members were on the books, representing 19 per cent. of our total membership.

The E.C. acted with commendable promptitude in dealing with the situation. They realised that with our impoverished funds it was quite impossible to discharge our obligations, and they recommended to the members the imposition of a levy of 1s. per week per member, to operate from March to June. This was carried by 310 to 88 votes. A further vote continued this levy until the end of October and, the situation having become somewhat easier, a 6d. levy per week was imposed from 1st November, to run as long as necessity demanded. Whilst members in receipt of Trade and Sick Benefit were exempt from the first levy of 1s. per week, the second levy for the same amount was exacted from all free members.

Our position, however, was much more desperate than was indicated in our Monthly Reports, and our real condition was communicated to the branches in a manifesto dated July 7th, 1879. This was a written document covering two pages of foolscap, and one copy was sent to each branch, with the most explicit instructions that its contents were to be kept strictly private. As at least thirty-three copies of the manifesto had to be written, the E.C. had evidently put in some strenuous work. The manifesto pointed out that the demands upon our funds had been for the past six months double and at times treble our total income, and that our accumulated capital had been reduced from over £1,000 to £200, and that not only had we exhausted the balance to our Trade Fund, but we had spent the money shown in our accounts to the credit of our Sick and Superannuation Fund. A powerful appeal was made to the loyalty of our members to stand by the organisation, which had proved its value to

our trade during the seven years of its existence; and a mental tonic was administered by the experience of one of the principal societies in the United Kingdom, who, in 1852, commenced the year with a membership of 11,617 and a capital of £21,705 4s. 11½d., and finished with 9,737 members and £1,721 2s. 11d., the depression being not nearly so acute as at the time our manifesto was issued. The E.C. therefore moved that, in addition to the levies proposed in the Monthly Report being either carried or rejected, that the Trade Donation of this Association be suspended for one month, commencing with the issue of votes from General Office. The votes had to be taken and sent on at the same time as the votes upon the 1s. per week levy.

This is the first and the last time that a serious proposal has been made to suspend any benefit, and nothing but an acute financial crisis could justify such a proposal. It is unfortunate now that the possibility of our making a similar appeal is so remote as to be almost ludicrous that a little more light had been shed upon the attitude of the members to the E.C. motion, no record of the vote is given, although the result was communicated to the branches. But the secrecy with which the proposal was made and its result was certainly justified under the circumstances, and it says much for the discretion and loyalty of our members that our parlous plight was carefully concealed from those who would have exulted in our downfall, and would have sought to profit by the untoward circumstances which had overtaken us, and which at times seemed likely to bring our society to an untimely end.

The proposal to suspend Trade Benefit was rejected, but there were other factors much more important than a vote of the members and which governed the situation, for a time, at all events, and the position was that branches whose funds were exhausted were unable to obtain financial assistance, and were, in consequence, unable to pay benefit. This condition of temporary bankruptcy was by no means universal, and most of the branches managed to pay their members on benefit with reasonable punctuality. But in Manchester, Ashton, Birmingham, London, and possibly a few more towns the officers had nothing to pay out with except pay orders, which were not current with the landlord, the butcher, or any other

purveyor of the necessities of life. They were, however, good for their face value with us, and in course of time every one of these orders was redeemed at par, and there are members of our society now living who were at one time possessors of at least a round dozen of these orders to pay, and who did not then, or do not now, consider they had a grievance against the society because they received their benefits as a very much deferred payment.

After all, adversity of this kind brings all that is best out of a man. It also shows up the cur in his true colours, and impels him to demand his pound of flesh, whoever goes without. In the lean times to which we are referring the invariable practice was that, so far as our funds would allow, priority must be given to members on Sick; anything over went to married men, and the single men without dependents stood back without grousing until their time came, as come it did, and this without any formal resolution or concerted action. It was simply regarded as the proper thing to do, and there was an end to it.

Mention must also be made to the generosity of several of our members, who, being of a provident character, had a little money put by, placed every penny they possessed at the service of their branches. We have the names of some of these members. They never talk about it, and do not seem to think they did anything out of the ordinary. We would gladly enshrine them in these pages, only we do not know all of them, and to omit any name from such a register would draw so painful and invidious a distinction that it has been deemed advisable to allow the benefactors of 1879 to remain in the memories of those who were witnesses of these acts of self-abnegation, and which was the one bright spot in the experience of our society in 1879.

The depression was short and sharp, and during the two last months of the year our unemployed roll sank to thirty-six and thirty-three. So hopeful was the outlook that the E.C. felt justified in taking a vote upon the propriety of reducing the November levy of 6d. per week to one-half that amount, which, needless to say, was carried by an overwhelming majority; and this reduction may be said to close our experiences of the most acute depression in trade and

the consequent most critical period in our history we had passed through during the earlier years of our existence.

It might reasonably be conjectured that during a period of such deep depression of trade as we experienced during this year that Trade Movements would have been deemed impossible, and the E.C. made no secret of the policy they favoured in respect of wages, and which were entirely governed by the conditions then prevailing, to the effect that our members should submit to reductions of wages; that every effort should be made to limit reductions to the smallest possible figure, and resistance should only be made when we were so closely associated with other trades as to make our isolation dishonourable. This policy was generally carried out. Belfast took separate action and suffered a reduction of 2s. Glasgow, who had a fifty-one hour week, was compelled to submit to a lengthening of the hours to fifty-four, whilst reductions in wages were accepted in Leeds, Sheffield, Manchester, Barrow, Blackburn, North-East Coast, etc., the changed conditions being generally applicable to the whole industry. Dundee were exceptionally unfortunate, having their hours lengthened from fifty-one to fifty-four per week, with a corresponding reduction in wages.

The strikes we engaged in were general in their operation and varied in their causes. The E.C. apprehended an attack on the hours, and took a vote of the society upon (1) resisting an extension of hours, and (2) imposing 1s. levy for this purpose. It is a reproach to our present-day members that in '79 we were so much in earnest that out of our 885 membership 447 voted for resistance, and one half of our total voted for the levy.

A strike took place in a firm of locomotive builders in Glasgow against an extension of hours. We excluded three members, and the A.S.E. excluded thirty-five of their members, who refused to come out. We were involved in a strike at Liverpool, where a reduction of $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. was demanded. The men were willing to accept 5 per cent., which, however, did not satisfy the employers. Our members were so dissatisfied with their association with the other trades on the Joint Committee that they seceded chiefly in order to ask for the support of non-unionists.

We were also involved in a dispute in London against a reduction of wages, and at this time had twenty-eight members on strike in Liverpool and sixteen in the London district, chiefly at Erith. We were also involved in a general strike at Bradford, where an attempt was made to increase the hours from fifty-four to fifty-six and a-half per week. This dispute was regarded as a test case, which would have affected the chief manufacturing towns in Yorkshire. The employers, however, appear to have been somewhat half-hearted about it, as from the commencement of the dispute they began to crumble away. No record appears of the termination of the strike, but several of the shops were filled with non-society men, who were paid so low a rate as £1 per week, and who were dear at the price. An appeal was made for financial assistance, which so stimulated the imagination and sympathy of the officers of the Sheffield Branch that they agreed to hand over their salaries each meeting night for the benefit of the Strike Fund. A strike also took place at a foundry at Stockton, where an attempt was made to revert to the fifty-nine hours. A determined resistance was put up by the whole of the workmen, but the ultimate result does not appear in our records.

As might be anticipated, our numerical and financial record for the year make a rather sorry showing. For the first time in our history our membership showed a slight falling off, a circumstance which has only occurred three times in the fifty years of our existence. The declension in our numbers was only trivial, amounting, as it did, to twenty-one members; but the moral result must have been much more disheartening than the material effect. However, we probably consoled ourselves then as we do now by saying that we are much better without the weak-kneed and irresolute pessimists, who run away at the first breath of adversity. During the year we admitted 147 members; 168 were excluded or died, leaving us with a membership of 823, distributed amongst thirty-two branches.

The levies imposed during the year appear to have been generally paid, as notwithstanding that at times one-fifth of our members were exempt from contributions our total income amounted to £1,940, or £2 7s. 2d. per member. Expenditure reached the substantial sum of £2,721, or

£3 6s. 1½d. per member, which was by far our highest proportional payment for twenty-two years. Of the foregoing total, £2,042 was spent on Trade Donation, and we finished up with the smallest balance shown in our accounts after the first full year of our existence, which amounted to £311, or 7s. 6d. per member. Our financial position was so precarious, that for the first and last time in our history a branch (Sheffield), proposed that our members voluntarily forego their benefit, viz.: "That those who have been regularly employed refrain from signing the vacant book during the Christmas holidays." The E.C. recommended this resolution to the consideration of the branches, but that appears to be as far as the recommendation went.

Altogether, the year 1879 was a time of stress and trial. Whilst we never faltered in our loyalty to contemporary organisations in opposition to an extension of the working week, our position was such that we found ourselves compelled to accept reductions in wages, except in such instances as we had formally pledged ourselves to co-operate with others in offering active opposition to any such demands. Our financial burdens were terribly heavy. We think nothing of a weekly contribution of 1s. 9d. nowadays, but it was a very different matter when our average rate of wages was somewhere in the neighbourhood of 30s. per week. We asked assistance from no one, but shouldered our burdens ourselves, and when we found it impossible to meet our financial obligations our members cheerfully acquiesced in the enevitable and patiently waited until these obligations could be discharged. Best of all, we preserved intact, our membership and our principles, and when the clouds rolled by were in a position to resume the task of building up the organisation which had been temporarily retarded owing to circumstances which had never been foreseen, which could not be guarded against, and over which we had no control.

1880.

For the first time and after considerable difficulty a fairly complete list of the rates of wages was compiled, and forms very interesting reading. The hours were fifty-four per week and the rates of wages ranged from 26s. in Dundee to 39s. in the London district. Other typical rates were: Leeds,

29s. 6d.; Newcastle, 31s. 6d.; Hartlepool, 29s. 9d.; Bradford, 28s.; Sheffield, 32s.; Birmingham, 30s.; Manchester, 34s.; Bolton, 32s.; Derby, 31s.; Liverpool, 32s.; Barrow, 33s.; Glasgow, 29s. to 30s.; Bury, 30s.

The strike at Bradford against an increase in the hours terminated in May, 1880, having lasted from February of the year previous, the resistance of the men to a 59-hour week having proved successful.

As might be anticipated, the society adopted a conservative policy in regard to wages movements, and the members were frequently enjoined to act with extreme caution in allying themselves with other trades in an attempt to obtain the restitution of the reductions which had been enforced against them.

Towards the end of the year, however, a general movement for an increase of 10 per cent. was instituted. After considerable negotiation an increase of $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. was offered and accepted. A firm of locomotive builders in Glasgow and a shipbuilding firm in Greenock stood out of the general arrangement, in consequence of which, a strike took place at each establishment.

A further dispute regarding a proposed rearrangement of hours took place at the chief shipbuilding yard in Belfast. The firm asked their workmen to work fifty-three and a-quarter hours for three months in the year and fifty-six and a-half hours for the remaining nine months. The A.S.E., Moulders, and our society objected to the change as contravening the fifty-four-hour week, and came out on strike. The struggle appeared likely to be a protracted one, but when the firm saw their men migrating in large numbers they amended their former proposal to fifty-three hours ten minutes for three months in the year and fifty-four hours for the remaining nine months, without any reduction of wages. Needless to say, these terms were accepted, and were very rightly regarded as a substantial success for the workmen.

It is gratifying to note the disposition of the society to cut down management expenses at this time, a suggestion from several branches, that each member be charged 3d. for a copy of the Annual Report being carried by 294 for and 22 against.

On the other hand, we have the Hartlepool Branch proposing that the office of General Secretary be made a full-time one. This, in view of the then financial position, was deferred by the E.C. for six months.

The question of an emblem was again raised, but again the E.C. found it necessary to make their desires subservient to their financial limitations, as they stated that the society's funds must not be used for such a purpose. But they invited the members to send in designs for their inspection, and only after a design had been selected and sufficient orders received to cover the cost would they proceed. It was also intimated that any accruing profit would be credited to the Management Fund! These conditions were quite sufficient to quash the wish for an emblem, until, at all events, we became more opulent than we were in 1880.

A levy of 3d. per week had been running during the year, at the end of which four of our Scottish branches proposed to terminate it, on the ground that it had lost the society many members and had deterred others from joining. The E.C. recommended the repeal of the levy, but it was remarkable that the members, by a three to one majority, decided to continue this payment.

A crisis similar to what we passed through in 1879 was bound to have a retarding effect upon our propaganda work. Numbers of our members out of work and out of compliance found it impossible to maintain their membership, and the wonder of it is that we did not experience a greater set-back than was the case, especially in view of the fact that we were unable for a considerable period to discharge our benefit obligations. It is little wonder, therefore, that our progress during 1880 was negligible, our gain in membership being represented by a unit. We reopened Glasgow No. 4 Branch (Cowcaddens), and broke new ground at Keighley; but had to again close Middlesbrough, whose membership had dropped to five, and whose total contributions were scarcely able to pay management expenses. Our total number of branches was thirty-three, membership 824, and 169 new members were admitted during the year.

Our financial results were much more satisfactory. Our income amounted to £1,620, or £1 19s. 4d. per member,

and expenditure to £1,115; our gain for the year being £505, giving us a total balance of £816 13s. 3d., or 19s. 9d. per member, which, however, was chiefly due to our Superannuation Fund, whose accumulated funds stood at £616.

A considerable amount of laxity appears to have existed in regard to the Tool Insurance Fund; which was compulsory, at the rate of 6d. per year; it only realised £2 19s., which represented the contributions of 118 members only.

The Management Fund continued its downward course, losing £81 12s. 7d. during the year, and showing a total deficiency of £424. The expenditure of General Office, however, cannot be deemed excessive; it amounted to £113 13s.

1881.

At the beginning of this year trade had shown considerable improvement, the January report showing only sixteen members out of work. These favourable conditions had the inevitable result of starting a number of wages movements, which appear to have been general to the whole engineering trade. Sunderland were first in the field, and were offered 2s. on wages of 30s. and under, and 1s. to those in receipt of 30s. to 34s., no offer being made to such as had over the latter figure, these terms were rejected, but after a two days' strike were agreed to.

At Newcastle a very variable settlement was agreed to. Some firms granted 15 per cent. advance, others 7½ per cent., and in some cases 5 per cent. was given. Barrow demanded 10 per cent., but after a conference a modest 1s. was accepted, our members giving notice for a further advance. Liverpool and Hull also initiated movements for an improvement in their rates of wages, the latter town succeeding in effecting a restoration of their old rates of wages.

This was all to the good, but our E.C. appeared to be very nervous about incurring responsibilities which could possibly be avoided, and they were continually counselling the branches to be cautious and bide their time, which would certainly come their way if they only exercised a little patience.

A considerable concession in overtime rates was obtained from the chief firm in Belfast, where time and one-eighth had been paid. The firm now agreed that the rates should be time and a-quarter for the first two hours and time and a-half for the remainder of the night.

Whilst our participation in wages and hours movements was almost invariably taken in association with other trades, it is gratifying to chronicle one exception. At Blackburn, where most of our members were seceders from the A.S.E., an advance of 2s. was conceded to our trade. The employers apparently repented of their generosity or were fearful of this concession extending to other trades, and three months afterwards the chief firm gave notice that fourteen days from the 10th September all contracts would cease. We had seven men on the books at the time, and a special effort to shop these men resulted in five of them being sent to neighbouring towns. The firm was then informed that no reduction of wages could be entertained. They then intimated their intention to pay the current rates for six months, then take the average of five Lancashire towns and pay that rate. This meant a 2s. reduction, which the E.C. refused to accept, and instructed our members accordingly. Ultimately matters were allowed to rest, and so ended what might have been a serious dispute, the conduct of which undoubtedly added to our prestige in Mid-Lancashire.

Further wages movements took place at Leeds, where restitution was made of the reductions enforced during 1879. At Manchester a movement to enforce the minimum of 36s., which seems to have been somewhat honoured in the breach, resulted in several of our members lifting their tools. They soon, however, obtained other employment at standard rates.

The overtime conditions at Keighley seem to have been peculiar to that town at the time. No extra payment was made for working late, and overtime was prevalent, seventy-four hours per week being the rule. Little wonder that the E.C. instructed our members to refuse to work late until more satisfactory conditions were agreed to. An attempt to get men from outside was unsuccessful, and the employers were compelled to fall back upon a never-failing source of supply—joiners. A request to our members to work overtime resulted in their lifting their tools, a non-society man

who came out being promised four weeks' benefit. The strikers had no difficulty in obtaining immediate employment, and the firms concerned were driven to have their patternmaking done in local joiners' shops, where the joiners were described as a "very poor sample," in regard to which our Report sapiently states: "We have an idea what a job good joiners can make; what can bad ones make of it?"

The question of the introduction of joiners into our trade appears to have troubled our society about this period, and for the first time we see evidences of a determination to restrict their employment at our trade, although not for the reason which subsequently dominated our policy in regard to the entry of all outsiders into our trade. The chief objection was to the undercutting of wages which followed the introduction of outsiders to patternmaking. It was laid down that if joiners were capable of working at our trade "let them do so by all means, but let them get the wages that pattern-makers get for doing it." A protest was also made against their tuition by members of our society, and exhortation to refuse to accept them as workshop companions, even if it was necessary to lift tools to preserve the inviolability of our trade to this form of dilution. This policy was carried out at Hartlepool, where two joiners were started in the patternshop of the largest firm. However, they appear to have been tolerated for a time, until a third member of the same trade put in an appearance, when a vigorous protest was made to the firm, who, however, remained obdurate, and it was only when notices were put in that the three interlopers were removed and harmony was re-established.

The result of what was probably our first active opposition to the introduction of craftsmen who had not been regularly introduced into our trade was to establish our prestige and to swell our membership in the district. The hands of the E.C.C. were considerably strengthened by resolutions strongly commending their action in this matter, which were received from London No. 1 and Erith Branches.

A good deal of propaganda work was undertaken toward the close of 1881, special efforts being directed to the Leeds and Ayrshire districts. It was the practice at that time to print circulars stressing the benefits paid by the society

and certainly not neglecting the advantages to be gained by organised effort in working conditions. These circulars not only bore the name and address of the General Secretary, but also of our local representative, and were distributed in the workshop by any of our members who had the courage and loyalty enough to do his bit toward converting what was too often a minority into a majority. This plan was fairly effective, and in view of the unorganised state of our trade was probably the only one which would yield satisfactory results.

Our numerical and financial operations during the year were quite satisfactory. We added five branches to our numbers, making our total thirty-eight. Our membership increased by 198, which was by far our biggest increase in any one year since our institution. We also achieved the dignity of a four-figure standard, our total reaching 1,022. Our income was the largest in our history, totalling over £2,000. Expenditure showed a reduction over that of previous years, and amounted to £1,110, the lowest per member for six years, and our balance in hand reached the quite respectable figure of £1,715, or £1 13s. 6d. per member.

Whilst our operations were perforce on a very modest scale, judging from present-day standards, the year under review was certainly a fairly successful one for our young organisation from every point of view.

1882.

This year was one of considerable activity in regard to wages movements, one of the most gratifying features being the evident determination of our ruling authorities to act on their own, and where this was impracticable, to insist upon our being called into consultation in the initial stages of a movement.

The much sought after but elusive Manchester minimum of 36s. was established at the commencement of the year. Several of our members were paid 2s. less, but all except four got it on putting in a week's notice, and these few soon obtained employment elsewhere, and the official rate was given as 36s. to 38s.

We had a tough struggle in Hartlepool with a firm who employed all except two or three patternmakers in that town.

A request was made for 2s. 6d. advance; 1s. 6d. was offered and refused, and ultimately a further offer was made of from 6d. to 2s. to certain selected men and nothing to the general body. This attempt to divide and conquer was unsuccessful, and the whole of the men lifted their tools. Our E.C.C. took up the cudgels vigorously on behalf of our members, and by picketing, counter advertisements, and stoppage of work sent out of the town, managed not only to keep the shop clear, but to shop most of the strikers, keeping only sufficient men in the town to keep the dispute alive. The three joiners whom we struck off were told that if they did not start in the patternshop they would be immediately discharged. To their credit they refused, and an intimation was given, that if this threat was carried into effect the whole of the joiners would strike, a most magnanimous act under the circumstances. Five blacklegs were brought in, but they do not seem to have been much good.

After a four months strike the firm granted 2s. to five men, who restarted, and gave an undertaking that priority of employment would be given to any of their old hands who wished to come back. Altogether a resolute and well-conducted dispute.

At this time the E.C.C. saw very clearly from the number of impending trade disputes in which we were likely to be involved that the society would have to provide themselves with the sinews of war, and they proposed that all free members, except those in receipt of benefit, pay a levy to the Benevolent Fund—the forerunner of our Contingent Fund—of 3d. per week for eight weeks. This was carried by 424 to 32 votes, over 41 per cent. of our total membership voting.

An indication that we were beginning to feel our feet occurred at Sunderland, where the A.S.E. had conducted the preliminaries incidental to securing an all-round advance of wages, and as an afterthought invited the co-operation of other trades, when the movement was well under way. Our response was to make formal application to the employers for an advance of 2s. on behalf of our own members. The A.S.E. received 2s., confined to members of their organisation, which offer was extended to our local members after a two days' ultimatum had been sent in.

An independent movement was instituted at Liverpool and Greenock. In the former district rates were advanced to the 1879 standard—34s. to 36s. In the Scottish town one half-penny per hour was conceded at the eleventh hour. In both cases a general movement was being conducted concurrently with ours, and in both instances we declined co-operation because of the reasons which impelled us to go on our own in Sunderland, where rates were raised from 33s. 6d. to 36s. 4½d.

Other wages movements embraced the Tyne, Coatbridge, Bradford, Belfast, Paisley increased to 30s., Hyde increased to 36s., Middlesbrough (where the branch was re-established for a third time); Edinburgh and Leith received ½d. per hour. Barrow, where 1s. 6d. was conceded, and several other districts obtained increases of wages, the chief characteristic of which was their lack of uniformity and the variable rate which resulted.

A vigorous campaign against the introduction of joiners into our trade was carried on, and we were successful in this quest in Glasgow and Leeds, whilst in Barrow, where joiners had been accustomed to do all ship patternmaking, our local secretary succeeded in obtaining an entry of four of our members into this branch of our trade.

We certainly made no bones about our readiness to proselytise members of other societies forty years ago. Birkenhead had always been regarded as a stronghold of the A.S.E., so far as members of our trade were concerned; so much so, that they refused to acknowledge the existence of our society in any shape or form. Nothing succeeds like success, however, and our manner of conducting a concurrent wages movement on the northern bank of the Mersey touched the fancy of the Birkenhead A.S.E. patternmakers to such an extent that they almost to a man turned over to us, an example followed by several A.S.E. members in Erith a few weeks afterwards.

Our members appeared to object to levies at this time as much as they do nowadays. Leeds and Smethwick sending in resolutions to avoid levies and raise the contributions to 1s. per week, the latter branch coupling with their resolution a rider, that Trade Benefit be raised to 12s. per week. On the advice of the E.C.C. both resolutions were waived until



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a general alteration of rules was decided upon, the latter body undertaking to form some plan that could be undertaken in the cheapest manner possible.

It is at all times desirable to have a good conceit of ourselves, and an excellent mental tonic is administered in an extract from a journal named "Metal," which we hope had a more prosperous and lengthy existence than we think was actually the case. From that publication we learn: "For modern iron and brass founding the patterns are either of wood or iron, far more usual of the former material; hence the patternmaker is a woodworker, but a woodworker of rather a peculiar kind. He must be a skilful joiner, working with almost the delicacy of a cabinet maker, and to this he must add the skill of an adept turner. But he needs an adaptability and a command of recourses far beyond that needed in ordinary joinery, cabinet making, or turnery. The reason for this is that in these trades the operatives are generally engaged in making stock articles, which are all made upon the same lines. The joiner who has made one panel door or sash window has no difficulty in producing hundreds, for it is but necessary to repeat his first work. So with a cabinet maker over a loo table or a wash-stand, or the turner with a bed-post or a curtain pole. But with the patternmaker precisely the reverse prevails. To-day he may be employed on a pattern, the like of which he has never seen before, and to-morrow on something quite different, and many of these patterns are of supreme difficulty and need deep and careful thought. Then, again, his ability to work from drawings must be far greater than in either of the other trades specified above. He must also have some little acquaintance with the routine of the foundry, in order that in his pattern he not only reproduces the drawing but also throws the article into such form that the moulder can readily deal with it, and that due allowance is made for shrinkage or other casualties."

Comparisons may be odious, but there is something in the foregoing which deserves the attention of our members, and especially of the younger element, who hold the pride of craft in contempt and profess a strong belief in the half-digested and imperfectly understood doctrines of the class war, industrial unionism, and other shibboleths which are

the very antithesis of the feelings of sturdy independence which animated our pioneer members in their wearisome and uphill fight to establish and maintain our society in its early days.

About this time a considerable amount of discontent existed because of the late issue of Monthly and Annual Reports. The quarterly financial statements appear to have been dropped after a brief trial as being wholly impracticable. The rules seemed to have been administered with a considerable degree of laxity, and all those responsible naturally enough blamed everyone else, and it seems to us a rather strange proceeding that the E.C.C. issued a solemn warning that they would rigorously enforce the rule which provided for the punctual sending in of the various reports for which branch secretaries were responsible. This warning, however, does not appear to have had the least effect in obtaining the punctual issue of our various reports.

For the first time in our history we recognised our liability towards a permanently injured member, the society voting in favour of a 1s. levy to a Leeds member who was rendered permanently incapable of following our trade by reason of an accident at his work. Our experience in this direction showed the need for a clearly defined and properly organised Disablement Benefit. The members were asked to forward their levies direct to Leeds in order to save expense, which order appeared to be more honoured in the breach than in the observance, and after months of appeals, threats, and exhortations the member agreed to compound his claim for a sum of £50, which was presented to him with considerable pomp and circumstance.

The most important event of the year, from an administrative point of view, however, was the consideration of certain proposals to alter the rules, the most important being the position of the General Secretary. That official and the E.C.C. seemed incapable of dealing with any question, except current and pressing workshop matters, and if urgency was required the branches generally acted first and either asked or assumed permission afterwards. The office work was utterly neglected, and some casual assistance rendered by members after working hours had no effect upon the general situation. Several branches had from time to time proposed that the office of General

Secretary be made a full-time position, but its consideration had been postponed for financial reasons, and latterly because the E.C.C. had not time to deal with the question.

However, when the E.C.C. did get a move on they moved with a vengeance, issuing a special circular to the branches, dated 21st June, 1882, and asking that the votes be in their hands on July 13th. The issues submitted were for and against an alteration of rules, which was carried by 421 to 61 votes, and on the main question of a full-time General Secretary 435 voted for and 91 against. The E.C. recommendation, that the salary be fixed at £2 per week, with house and firing, was carried by 365 to 139 against; and by 340 to 142 votes, it was decided to meet the extra cost by increasing the contributions by 1d. to 10d. per week, the extra payment being credited to the Management Fund. So from the first Monday of August, 1882, we achieved the dignity of having a full-time official at the head of our affairs, which was just about the worst stroke of luck which ever happened the individual in question.

We had at that time forty-two branches and 1,174 members, and with a potential membership of many times that number. If our trade had been susceptible to the methods of organisation which apply to unskilled workmen, who can be dealt with *en masse*, this appointment would have been fully justified, but in an isolated and scattered trade such as ours, the members of which are not easily swayed by soap-box oratory, only one method was, and is, possible, and that is, organisation in the workshop and the inculcation of the principles and application of Trade Unionism on the youthful mind at the same time and by the same men who teach the embryo patternmaker his trade. These are the methods we have and always will adopt, and it is by these means alone that we have achieved the position we now occupy in the Trade Union world.

What a General Secretary, permanent or otherwise, can do to assist in the work of organisation is to do his own work at the General Office cleanly, thoroughly, and promptly, and so strengthen the hands and stimulate the efforts of our organisers in the workshop. Our first General Secretary did none of these things. He undoubtedly worked hard and efficiently whilst at the bench, but when he was removed

to the office it was a case of the less a man has to do the less he will do, and during his comparatively short time as a permanent official the work at Central Office fell into more confusion than when he did the work as a spare-time job.

During the year we added four branches to our number, making us forty-two in all. Our membership during the same period increased by 196 to 1,218. The exclusions were rather heavy, sixty-three members having dropped out. Our income showed an increase proportionate to our increase in membership, totalling £2,240, or £1 16s. 9d. per member. Expenditure amounted to £1,487, giving us a gain of £753 for the year, our total worth being £2,468, or £2 0s. 6½d. per member. Our Trade Fund showed rather well, the expenditure being at the rate of 6s. 8½d. per member, the lowest since 1875, and the deficiency being reduced to £25.

It seemed impossible to keep management expenses within the bounds imposed by rule. It showed a deficiency over the year of £53, and a total deficiency of £731. The Tool Levy of 6d. per annum was quite insufficient to meet our liabilities to this fund; only £5 19s. 6d. was realised as income, and expenditure amounted to £43 10s. 6d., leaving a deficiency of over £17.

The most regrettable feature of the 1882 Annual Report was its late issue. It did not reach the branches until December of the succeeding year, for which certain laggard branches received the full blame.

1883.

The general condition of trade at the beginning of the year was fairly good, but fell off during the later months. Wages movements were fairly plentiful and successful on a very moderate plane. We were fairly busy keeping our trade intact from the introduction of interlopers. A firm in Paisley set joiners on at patternmaking, and our members at once lifted their tools and succeeded in obtaining employment elsewhere. They were invited to return, after the joiners were tried and found wanting, and received a solatium in the shape of 1s. per week advance. We were not so fortunate in respect of another venture in the same town. We protested against joiners, and our members were

discharged, a member of the A.S.E. being retained to teach the interlopers. Our efforts to obtain redress by an appeal to the local branch proved unavailing. We had a similar dispute at Bolton, where, however, we received the support of the A.S.E. and Steam Engine Makers.

The first attempt to unionise a patternshop was made at the principal firm at Stockton, where a successful attempt had been made by the boilermakers to achieve this end. As showing the mixed character of a typical patternshop at that time, it is interesting to note that the twenty-nine pattern-makers were divided up as follows: Eleven U.K., ten A.S.E., two Carpenters and Joiners, and six over-age men. The wages there were 35s. and 36s. per week, and "a good feeling existed between master and man."

During the year we had a somewhat remarkable experience at a firm in Halifax, where an agitation was initiated for improved overtime rates. The A.S.E. refused to allow our society to co-operate, and ultimately offered to drop the overtime question and accept 2s. per week advance. They were offered 1s. advance, one and one-eighth time to 10 p.m., and one and a-half time afterwards, and our members were informed that these terms would not be extended to them. They thereupon took "strong" action, with the result that the A.S.E. got 1s. advance, the non-society men nothing, and our members 2s.

By far the most important trade dispute during the year was at Sunderland, and it is scarcely an exaggeration to say that we are feeling the effects of that dispute at the present day. The origin of the movement was to participate in an application for a 2s. advance, which was general to the district. This programme was subsequently extended to the limitation of the proportion of apprentices to journeymen, in the ratio of one apprentice to two *bona fide* mechanics; no apprentice to start after 16 years of age, and the term of his apprenticeship to continue until he had attained his majority; and in order that the proportion of apprentices should not exceed the stipulated number during slack times, no more apprentices should be engaged until the proportion dropped to two to five men.

A tilt was also run at the character note system, and intimation was given that the members of the joint trades had

been instructed to refuse to reply to the questions usually asked them for the purposes of this inquiry when they started in a fresh shop, and in order to show the employers that business was meant, notice was given that working on new work between 6 p.m. on Saturday and 6 a.m. on Monday was prohibited. June 21st, 1883, was given as the date upon which these new arrangements would operate.

The employers conceded 1s. advance to all having 35s. and over and 2s. to all below that rate, but refused to accept the demand to limit the proportion of apprentices or to abolish the character note system, and upon these two issues was fought, perhaps, the most protracted strike in the engineering trade. Twenty-four out of our thirty-three members came out on strike with the general body. During its early days numerous attempts were made by Members of Parliament, civic authorities, and other local notabilities to act as intermediaries, but without result, and eventually the dispute came to be regarded as a chronic condition of affairs on the Wear, and but little notice was taken of it outside the actual participants. Our members got rather tired of it. A resolution from Liverpool, "That we bring the strike to an end," being submitted to a vote and lost by a substantial majority. We had only four men on strike at that time.

In February, 1885, the Joint Committee offered to withdraw their circular of June, 1883, the shops being fairly well filled by this time, but the employers insisted on a revision of the overtime rates, claiming that enhanced rates be paid after fifty-four hours had been worked instead of every day standing for itself, as heretofore. This new move brought in the shipwrights, joiners, blacksmiths, etc., and after a few weeks the employers withdrew their demand.

Our seat of government had been by this time removed to Glasgow, and your E.C.C. sent a delegation to Sunderland to interview the Joint Committee with a view to withdrawing any embargo against our trade starting. This was agreed to and confirmed by the Executive Council of the A.S.E., and the shops opened to such of our members as could secure employment. We had only three men concerned, and they did not get a start for several months after the strike, so far as we were concerned, had formally closed. Certainly, this dispute played havoc with our Sunderland Branch, whose

numbers were reduced to thirteen. It need only be added that the strike lingered on for a few weeks after we had done with it, because the District Committee of the A.S.E. challenged the right of the Joint Committee to withdraw the original demand, of which the former body claimed to be the sole authors, and whilst the two bodies were squabbling as to who should decently terminate the strike, the men on the street solved the problem by going back to work whenever and wherever they had the chance. The strike lasted nearly two years, and we have never yet succeeded in obtaining an agreement with the employers to either limit apprentices or abolish a character note system.

Our progress during the year was anything but satisfactory. We only added one branch to our number—Swansea—giving us forty-three branches, and that branch did not last long. However, it opened out the principality of Wales and justified our claim to represent the trade in the four countries of Great Britain. Our membership increased by forty-two only, and reached a total of 1,260. Our exclusions were terribly heavy, numbering ninety-three. Income showed a steady increase and amounted to £2,578, or £2 1s. per member, this being chiefly due to a 3d. per week levy, which ran during the currency of the Sunderland strike. Our expenditure reached £2,089, giving us a gain of nearly £500, and leaving us with a balance of £2,957, or £2 6s. 11½d. per member, and for the first time in our history the Management Fund paid its way, with a gain of £78, which did something to reduce the large deficiency which had been steadily accumulating since the institution of our society. At this time the Tool Fund was in an insolvent condition, not so much because of the claims for benefit, but because the members seemed to suit themselves whether they paid or not. Only 127 subscribed to a fund supposed to be compulsory upon every member.

1884.

This year was by far the most momentous in our history. During the greater part of that period our position was very precarious. Mismanagement and negligence had been steadily getting worse since the full-time appointment of the General Secretary, and for the first few months of the year confidence

between the branches and the central administrative authority had been completely destroyed. Discipline there was none, and each branch seemed to be a law unto itself, and carried on or neglected its business just as it saw fit. The Monthly Reports were issued about four weeks late and contained little or no record of general interest to the members, but were full of querulous excuses and complaints because of the neglect of some branches to send in their reports, which made the punctual issue of the Monthly and Yearly Reports impossible. It is a great pity to reopen sores long since healed or publish details of maladministration which are long ago dead and forgotten, but a history of the society would be not only incomplete, but grossly misleading were we to ignore happenings which vitally affected us at the time and which until eight years ago left their impress upon our constitution and policy.

As has been already indicated, the then General Secretary suffered from having too much leisure. How he occupied his time it would be unprofitable at this time to indicate, but shortly after his withdrawal from the bench a serious shortage in the general accounts was discovered by the E.C.C. Treasurer, who had been seriously ill, and whose duties had been undertaken by the General Secretary. The latter officer accepted responsibility and made an agreement with the E.C.C. to repay so much per week by deduction from his salary. Further deficiencies made their appearance and were dealt with in the same way, in consequence of which the actual weekly payments to the General Secretary were reduced to less than one-half. This made him mutinous, and the E.C. and himself were continually at loggerheads. It is impossible to withhold sympathy from the E.C.C. at that time; they were between the devil and the deep sea with a vengeance. On the one hand they were inundated with complaints from the branches because of the persistent neglect of the General Secretary. They would have suspended him readily enough, but they wanted the shortage of funds made good, being of opinion that our society was not firmly enough established to survive the shock of a revelation of the true state of affairs at General Office. On the other, they had a mulish officer who counted on these circumstances as preventing his Executive from disciplining him according

to rule, and who, with a blind disregard of causes, declared if he got little pay he would do less work. The E.C.C. at that time decided that the interests of the society demanded that the utmost secrecy be observed regarding the conditions at Headquarters, and they kept their secret admirably. When new members of the E.C.C. were elected they did not even reveal the position to them. The climax, however, was reached when the General Secretary refused the E.C.C. permission to use the office for their meetings, and locked the door on them. So in the dark and quiet seclusion of the stairhead they formally suspended him, and issued instructions to the Newcastle Branch to elect a Secretary *pro tem.* in his place. A special summoned meeting was held for this purpose, and the writer, then an unfledged youngster, whose experience was limited to having acted once as a provisional auditor, and who held the position of Vice-President for one quarter, was duly elected to an office which was expected to last for one month, but which was eventually held for thirty-three years.

A painful feature of that historic meeting—some survivors of which are still with us—was that, with one exception, not a voice was lifted up on behalf of the man who up to then had been chiefly responsible for the foundation and progress of our organisation. The power of dismissal lay in the hands of the society, who, by a vote taken at the May, 1884, monthly meeting, decided by 430 to 6 votes to dismiss him from office. It was also resolved at the same time to hold a branch representative meeting—in reality an Executive Council meeting with somewhat extended powers.

The position at General Office in May, 1884, can scarcely be realised nowadays. Except for numerous complaints, communications with the branches had almost ceased; the exchequer was empty. Owing to the impossibility of obtaining remittances from the branches, we could not pay the modest 5s. per week rent for our premises in Villa Place. The E.C.C. were meeting in hopes that their salaries would be paid in due course, and, worst of all, we owed the printers over £70, and for the second time in our history had received an intimation that no more printing would be done until we had liquidated our indebtedness. Urgent letters were sent out to such branches as were supposed to have funds and

who might be expected to part with some of them, the sum of £100 being aimed at. About one-half of that amount was received, with which we relieved our most pressing financial difficulties, and from that day to this we have had no further difficulty with regard to money matters at Headquarters.

In the meantime preparations were being made to hold the Executive Council meeting, branches over thirty being entitled to direct representation, the remainder being grouped in accordance with rule. Every latitude was given the branches in regard to the business to be discussed at the meeting, each branch being invited to send in any question they wished for discussion and treatment; and in the interval the arrears of current business were overtaken. The Annual Report was taken in hand, and a completed financial printed statement was prepared in readiness for the meeting, which was held in the Durham Ox, Newcastle, on September 8th, 1884. Twenty-nine delegates being present, as also were five members of the E.C.C. and the General Secretary *pro tem*.

Fourteen subjects were sent in for consideration, and the hours of business were fixed from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., and 2-30 p.m. to 6 p.m., and 6s. 6d. was fixed as the allowance for one day's expenses. A motion to substitute third for second-class railway fare was ruled out of order.

The Sunderland strike was approved, and a resolution passed, that we ascertain the amount our members had received from the A.S.E. with a view to its repayment. This was subsequently found to be impracticable, but we salved our consciences by making a grant of £10 to the Strike Fund.

Payment of Trade Benefit was dealt with, the finding of the Council being embodied in our rules as it appears at present.

At this juncture it was found necessary to appoint a door-keeper to prevent the delegates running out and into the room.

It was also decided to take the opinion of the branches each year as to the propriety of our being represented at the Trades Union Congress.

Measures were taken to retain the membership of our members going to sea or abroad, and reference was made to a

former attempt to establish a branch in New York, in regard to which there is no trace.

The second day's proceedings were concerned with the chief business of the meeting—"The alleged neglect on the part of E.C.C. in dealing with the business of the association." The President of the E.C.C. was requested to leave the chair, his place being taken by the Vice-President, Bro. David Jones (Birmingham).

The complaints launched against the E.C.C. were many and various and ranged from failure to send stationery to neglect to send money to the branches. The true reason for most of the trouble being quite unknown to and unsuspected by the delegates, it came as a bombshell not only to the meeting, but to three recent members of the E.C.C., when a frank statement was made of the true position at Headquarters. After a whole day had been occupied with charges, counter-charges, recriminations, and explanations, it was decided to appoint a Sub-Committee of six, with the officers, to "consider the deficiencies and draw up a report to be submitted to the delegates next day." The report recommended that the remaining deficiency in our accounts of £14 13s. be repaid by the late General Secretary, the old members of the E.C.C. and the Auditors in equal proportion, exonerated the Treasurer from all blame, and censured the E.C.C. for not having appointed a *pro tem.* Treasurer. This report was unanimously accepted next morning.

The E.C.C. were then invited to defend their attitude, and there is no doubt but that the three new members, through their spokesman, made a complete and masterly reply to the charges which had been preferred against the whole body, and threw a lurid sidelight upon sordid squabbles which had been going on for months between themselves and an official who seemed to have lost all sense of responsibility and dignity, and was obstinately bent upon making a position for which he was entirely responsible as awkward and impossible as he could for half-a-dozen well-meaning men who were hopelessly struggling with adversity.

After considerable further discussion, a resolution was carried declaring that the meeting had lost all confidence in the E.C.C.; that their continuance in office would be prejudicial to the interests of the society, and calling upon them

to resign, three of the old members being singled out for special condemnation.

A temporary E.C.C. was appointed by the meeting, and nominations for the General Secretary and seat of government were made for submission to the branches.

The E.C.C. were then called in and informed of the resolution of the Council, the three new members of that body being exempted from any personal censure, and were, in fact, complimented on the conscientious and able manner in which they had fulfilled their duties in the face of almost unprecedented difficulties; but it was held that no discrimination could be shown between the members of that body. The E.C.C. then formally resigned, and the late General Secretary was, by a unanimous vote, expelled for misappropriation of funds and gross neglect of duty; and so ended the most painful, humiliating, and dangerous experience our society ever went through or probably will ever undergo.

The general effect of the Council meeting was excellent. Representatives got to know each other, and knowledge certainly begat confidence, and, better than all, the first steps were taken to establish that sense of discipline and concurrence with the rules which had been conspicuous by its absence, and without which orderly and efficient government was and is impossible.

At the same time, it is obvious that with every intention to be fair and impartial the Council treated the E.C.C. somewhat harshly. They seemed to entirely lose sight not only of their motives, but of their desperate attempts to remedy the neglect at Headquarters, and if they were to blame for concealing a deficiency in accounts they did it with the best intentions, and they erred, in company with most of the governing bodies of this and other societies who have been placed in a similar quandary from time to time.

Other questions considered by the General Council dealt with the establishment of a Legal Defence Fund; the extension of our society abroad, which was allowed to stand over from now to the present day; the establishment of Trade Benefit members; reorganisation of our system of bookkeeping, and of our Monthly Report, by throwing it open to the ventilation of members' views likely to benefit the society; a periodic

vote as to holding a Council meeting; all of which questions it was decided to submit to a vote of the members with a view to their inclusion in new rules which were being revised by popular vote at the time.

It is interesting to note that on the last day the delegates met at 8 a.m. The meeting lasted three and a-half days, and the total cost amounted to £96 18s. 6d.

Trade was very bad during the whole year, and in consequence no movements to improve conditions were practicable. Reductions in wages were enforced on the Tyne and Clyde and ranged from 1s. to 2s. 3d. per week. The only kick we appeared to have given was at Dunston-on-Tyne, where a new firm sought to introduce a joiner into the pattern-shop, the whole of our members and some non-society men coming out on strike. An attempt to introduce piecework into our trade by a firm in Hyde was unsuccessful.

The question of altering the rules had been before the members during the year, and a certain number of votes had been returned and utilised. Other amendments were submitted from time to time and voted on, but the whole business had been conducted in a casual and haphazard fashion, and perhaps it was fortunate that the alterations were not of a vital character. Had it been otherwise, it is questionable if they would have reflected the considered opinion of the members.

At the instance of the General Council the election of General Secretary and seat of government was expedited, the result being that the *pro tem.* holder was elected, and after two votes Glasgow was selected as the seat of government, after a spirited contest with Birmingham.

The election of an E.C.C. was short-circuited, the district nominating only the actual number required, and the submission of the names to a vote of the members was a mere formality and was regarded as such, as only three branches took the trouble to vote.

We had considerable trouble to change our title by dropping out the word "Kingdom." We took several votes, as authority could only be received from the Registrar if two-thirds of the members voted in favour. We managed it in

time by allowing members to send in their votes "for this time only."

The seat of government was transferred to Glasgow at the end of December, 1884, and so commenced a peripatetic form of administration which lasted till 1912, and which transferred our Headquarters on no fewer than six occasions.

It is scarcely to be wondered at that under the circumstances of bad trade and other untoward conditions we made little or no progress during this eventful year of our history. One new branch was opened at Gateshead, making our number of branches forty-four. Only 102 new members were admitted, whilst 142 were excluded. We suffered a reduction of membership of forty-five, having 1,217 members at the end of the year. Our income, owing to the levies which continued throughout the year, was the largest on record, amounting to £2 7s. 8½d. per member, and reaching an aggregate of £2,902. Expenditure was exceptionally heavy and amounted to £3,324, or £2 14s. 7½d. per member. We lost over the year's transaction £422, which left us with a total balance of £2,535, or £2 1s. 8d. per member.

Altogether an eventful and in some respects a disappointing year, which yet gave hopes of better results in the future, which anticipations were amply fulfilled in the course of time.

1885.

During this year we completed the revision of our rules. We were in the somewhat anomalous position of being a society with the great majority of its members in England and its seat of government situated in Scotland. We do not know of a similar case in the Trade Union movement. At all events, we had to register our rules in Edinburgh and could only do so by the cancellation of our Certificate of Registry in England. The delays contingent upon these unusual conditions were more protracted than usual, and it was not until November of 1885 that the rules were issued to our members, this issue being the first that hundreds of our later entrants had ever seen. The rules came into operation on January 1st, 1886, and nearly two years were occupied in the work of revision, printing, and issue.

The alteration in the rules dealing with branch officers were few and unimportant, the chief being the abolition of the office of check book-keeper, whose duties were transferred to the treasurer.

The Executive Council was retained in its original form, except that the provision was made that a vote of the members be taken at every yearly meeting in December as to the propriety of holding a meeting the succeeding June.

The new rule also provided that, whilst the seat of government be decided upon every three years, it be not allowed to remain in one district more than two periods of three years in succession.

It was decided that the Executive Committee be appointed by and from the district where the seat of government was situated, instead of being nominated by the local branch and elected by the society.

The election of General Secretary was made contemporary with that of locality of the seat of government, and it was laid down that he must devote the whole of his time to the business of the association.

An important addition to the rules was that provision was made for the formation of District Committees. They consisted of president, secretary, and two representatives from each branch, and their duties were to deal with disputes between our members and their employers. Members acting contrary to the society's rules were amenable to this body. Their remuneration was fixed at 6d. per meeting, with 1s. 6d. to the secretary. This rule, however, lay in abeyance for a considerable time after it was incorporated in our rules.

The rule regarding the opening of new branches, and giving new members the privilege of joining at a much reduced entrance fee was continued. It was a rule open to grave abuses, which may be exemplified by the action of the E.C.C., who opened a branch in Glasgow without name, habitation, books, or organisation, but for the avowed purpose of inducing candidates to join at less than one half of the ordinary entrance fee. The bait was not, however, effective on account of the deep depression in trade at the time.

New rules were introduced allowing members going to sea or abroad transferring to honorary membership, their

contributions being fixed at 5d. per week. Foremen were also allowed the same privilege at a still further reduced contribution of 4d. per week, which entitled both grades to Funeral and Superannuation Benefits. The latter clause caused endless bickering on account of the difficulty of classifying a foreman, until it was laid down that a foreman was a supervisor who did not do any constructive patternmaking.

Contributions by a special vote of the society were continued at 10d. per week and benefits remained unaltered, and in spite of the insolvency of the Tool Fund the yearly levy was again fixed at 6d. per member.

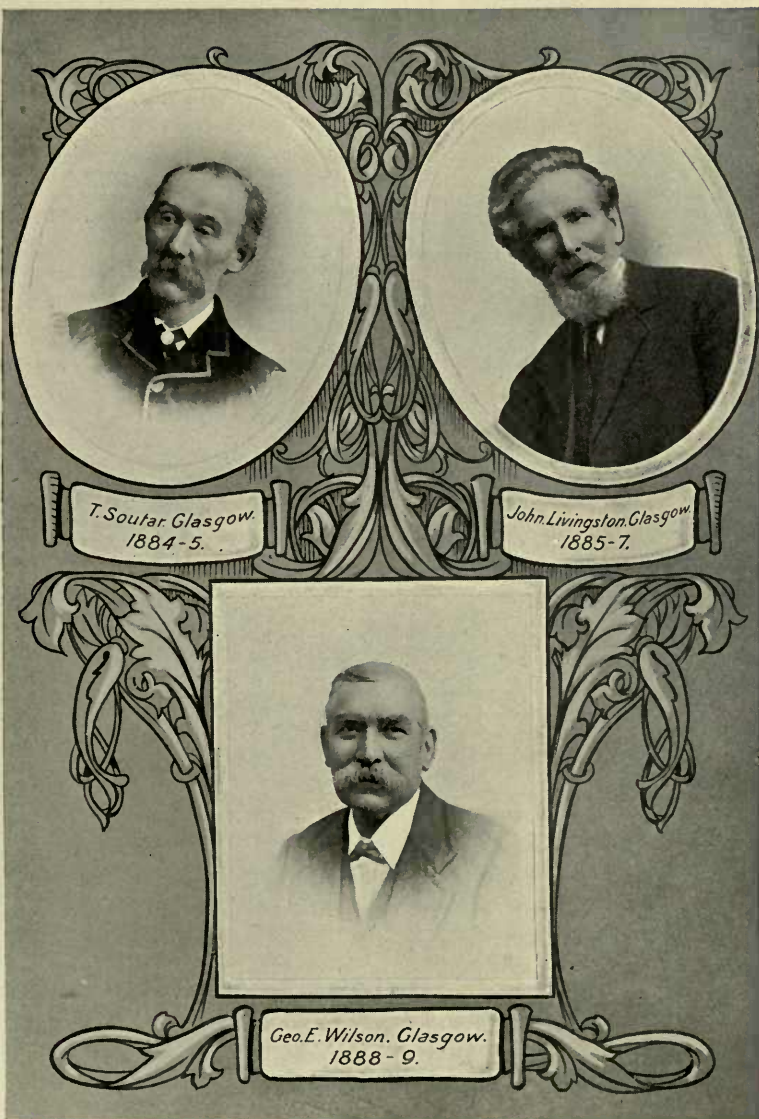
A slight alteration was made in regard to future alteration of rules, which had to be sanctioned by a vote of two-thirds of the members, the actual proposals for alteration being submitted to the votes of the members.

Trade was exceedingly bad during the whole year, for the greater part of which our average unemployed was somewhere in the neighbourhood of 10 per cent. As a consequence, no movement of an aggressive character was even attempted. We were compelled, however, to act on the defensive at Thorncliffe, where, with a 28s. rate, we were asked to accept a reduction of 2s. per week. The notice applied to and was accepted by the workmen in the other departments. Of thirty-three patternmakers seventeen were non-society men and two A.S.E., so the position was pretty hopeless. Our members, however, came out on strike, sacrificing their jobs for good and closing the branch.

Another dispute of a quite different character took place at Elswick, where some 5,000 men came out on strike against an alleged tyrannical manager. We had thirty-three members involved. The strike was ultimately referred to arbitration after it had lasted fifteen days.

Reductions of wages were enforced on the Mersey, those having 30s. and under suffering 1s. reduction, with twice that amount against those paid above that sum.

By a vote of the members it was decided to affiliate with the Trades Union Congress, a connection which, with one exception, has been maintained up to the present time. It may also be noted that your then General Secretary, with one exception, represented the society from 1885 to the year of



**E.C.C. PRESIDENTS,
Glasgow.**

his resignation in 1917, being for ten years a member of the Parliamentary Committee and representing the Congress at the Pittsburg Convention of the American Federation of Labour in 1905.

We cannot claim to have made any substantial progress during 1885. We closed two branches at Thorncliffe and Swansea and opened one already referred to as a "branch of convenience," our total number of branches being forty-three. We had a slight increase in membership from 1,217 to 1,241. Our contributions again broke all previous records, and cost each member £2 9s. 5½d. Expenditure amounted to £3,354, or £2 14s. per member, our funds being depleted by a sum of £300, leaving us with a balance of £2,246, or £1 16s. 2½d. per member. Our exclusions continued to be very heavy, no fewer than 115 members falling out owing to various causes.

We had by far the most serious loss of tools by fire ever experienced in our history, twenty-six of our members having lost their kits by fire at the Barrow shipyard, at a cost to the society of £212 4s. 7½d. The E.C.C. imposed a levy of 3s. 6d. per member to meet this expenditure, which, however, exceeded our income by £63, our total deficiency to that fund amounting to £120.

The depressed condition of trade during the whole year was responsible for the very unsatisfactory results from both an organising and a financial standpoint.

1886.

The chief feature of this year was a dreary and monotonous complaint of bad trade. It seemed never ending in its duration and hopeless in its prospects. Wages reductions were the order of the day and ranged from 1s. to 2s. per week. Our average rate of wages after reductions had been enforced was £1 11s. 4d., or 1s. 3d. less than the average for 1885. No attempt was made to obtain any concessions in regard to working conditions. A levy of 3d. per week ran the whole year, a proposal that it be doubled being lost by a small majority.

By the merging of four Glasgow branches into one we suffered a reduction in the number of our branches of three,

giving us forty in all. We had some compensation for this set-back, however, in a small increase in our membership from 1,241 to 1,279. Our total income amounted to £3,033—£630 less than the year previous. Expenditure reached £3,460, and our funds were depleted by £430, leaving us with a total balance of £1,819, or £1 8s. 5½d. per member, which is the lowest recorded since the lean times of 1879.

1887.

The general condition of trade during this year was dull.

An improvement took place during the earlier months, but it did not last long, and at no time was there any buoyancy in the industrial position. The slight spurt, however, was sufficient to justify some effort to regain the reductions which had been enforced during the previous years. Hartlepool led the way and succeeded in obtaining a restitution of 2s. per week without much trouble.

A similar movement was instituted at Liverpool and Birkenhead, but not with a similar result, and after considerable negotiation a strike took place, forty-five U.K.'s, twenty A.S.E.'s, and thirteen "nons" being involved, and it was decided by the Joint Committee that in future 33s. be the minimum rate for our trade on the Mersey. We had, however, evidently been too sanguine, and eventually we accepted 31s. 6d. as a minimum starting rate, which was equivalent to an advance of 1s. 6d. per week to a proportion of the men.

A general turn-out took place at Belfast on the question of weekly pays, and terminated in the defeat of the men, who returned to work unconditionally.

We were involved in a general and protracted strike in Bolton for the restitution of a 2s. which had been enforced during the previous year. Every effort was made to settle the strike by mediation and conciliation, but in vain, and a vigorous and long sustained effort was made by the local employers to fill their shops with blacklegs, recruited chiefly from Scotland. After lasting several months the men agreed to go back on the old rate of wages, overtime to be restricted to breakdowns and shop repairs, formation of a board of inquiry and conciliation composed of five representatives from

each side, who should investigate as to whether an advance of wages was warranted and if so any advance not to exceed 2s. per week, and in case of disagreement an umpire to be appointed. This ended a nine months' strike, the most protracted dispute in the engineering trade since the Sunderland strike. The ultimate result was unfavourable to the men's demands.

We did not add to the number of our branches during the year, which remained at forty, but our membership increased by fifty-five, and at the end of the year stood at 1,334. Our admissions were 182 and our exclusions 116. Financially our position was much more favourable. Our 3d. per week levy ran throughout the year and was supplemented by an additional 3d. per week for the first quarter, when by a vote it was knocked off. Our total income amounted to £3,369, or £2 10s. 6d. per member, the highest proportionate income in our history. Expenditure reached £3,109, giving us a welcome gain of £260, our balance reaching £2,079, or £1 11s. 2d. per member.

A rather curious decision of the E.C.C. is worth chronicling. They decided against taking the usual vote for or against representation at the Trades Union Congress on the grounds that the funds of the society could not be used for this purpose. This decision was the means of breaking our continuous representation at Congress, and was upset the next year.

1888.

A substantial and well-sustained improvement took place during this year, and we have it on record that on several occasions we were unable to supply men on the application of employers; a most remarkable and unprecedented state of affairs. As might be anticipated, no time was lost by our various branches in seeking to obtain the restitution of reductions of wages to which they had been subjected. As a matter of fact, the action of our trade was anticipated in several instances by the voluntary action of the employers. This was not a common weakness, it is true, but still it is gratifying to record that this practice was by no means uncommon thirty-three years ago. One rather significant instance was at Bolton, where the employers, having successfully resisted both by fighting and arbitration their workmen's

demand for 2s. advance, voluntarily granted that amount. Our members in Belfast received 1s. 6d. advance in two instalments. Blackburn and Hull participated in a general movement for an advance of 2s. per week.

On the Mersey we invited the A.S.E. to join with us in seeking an advance, which they declined. We then sent an application for an advance of 2s. on behalf of the whole trade, and received an offer of 1s. 6d. for Birkenhead and 6d. for Liverpool, reversal of the terms agreed to the previous year. A subsequent communication, however, modified this offer considerably, Birkenhead employers stating that when they offered 1s. 6d. they meant 6d. only!

A strike took place of the whole engineering trades in the Mid-Tyne district, where an application for the usual 2s. was put in. After three weeks, work was resumed on an immediate advance of 1s. 6d., with an additional 6d. a month later to all receiving above 30s. per week. These terms were also conceded by the Hull employers. Our Preston Branch did a good stroke for themselves by joining in a general movement for a 2s. advance. They were the only section who had not been reduced, and they participated in the concession which was ultimately granted.

At Bradford a general movement secured an all-round advance of 2s. At Barrow our members succeeded in raising their rates from 32s. and 33s. to a minimum of 34s. Advances of from 1s. 6d. to 2s. per week were conceded on the North-East Coast and at Greenock, where our members were described as being the lowest rated patternmakers in the United Kingdom, their rate being 6d. per hour, they obtained an advance of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per hour, after having refused an offer of half that amount.

A wages movement in Glasgow was initiated for $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per hour advance and for the first time in our history was confined to our trade. At that time we had 150 members in that city. There were thirty members of the A.S.E. and about 150 non-society men, and it was an uphill task getting all these elements into line. Even our own members were lukewarm at the commencement. But eventually a printed application was sent to every employer in the district, which was generally ignored. A second communication was sent of a more

peremptory character and threatening a stoppage in the event of non-compliance. Even this did not elicit any general rejoinder, but the advance was given at the eleventh hour, except by a firm in Newton, where nineteen of our men came out. Another firm with a liking for fractions paid one-fifth of a penny short, and eleven of our members were withdrawn, leaving thirteen non-society men at work. Altogether for a first attempt in what was the largest engineering centre in the kingdom this movement was an unqualified success, and was the forerunner of all the efforts we have made since through our organisation to improve the conditions of our trade throughout the Clyde district. It may be noted, as in numerous other instances, our action stimulated the other sections of the engineering trade to follow our example, and that a general advance of 5 per cent. was granted throughout the district.

Our Hartlepool members succeeded in obtaining an advance of 1s. per week, but their neighbours in Middlesbrough were not so fortunate, several of them having to come out on strike in consequence of the refusal of the employers to grant any concession. At that time Middlesbrough was a hot-bed of non-societyism and was by far the worst organised town on the North-East Coast. We had a dispute at one of the largest shops in Leeds over the old, old question of the introduction of a joiner into our trade. One A.S.E. member and one non-society man remained at work.

During the year a vigorous effort was made by the E.C.C. to enforce our rules regarding the infliction of fines. Several branches were very lenient, and in at least one case a branch had passed a formal resolution against the infliction of fines! A strong reminder in the Monthly Report and a threat to fine secretaries guilty of neglect of duty in this matter had the desired effect. But some rather curious explanations were received, one from Renfrew being to the effect that only one free member—the secretary—was liable to any fine, the remainder being at sea.

The net result of our various wages movements during the year was to raise our average rates to £1 12s. 9½d., an increase during the year of 1s. 1½d.

With a fairly favourable condition of trade during the year we made considerable progress. Our branches increased by

five to a total of forty-five, which, however included a branch of convenience opened at Leith in order to allow certain eligible non-society men of mature years to enter at a reduced entrance fee. The branch, as such, never had a *bona fide* existence, using the machinery of the Edinburgh and Leith Branch, until, having done its work, it was closed. The addition to our membership was by far the greatest on record, amounting to an increase of 25 per cent. Our gain in numbers was 297, and our total membership reached 1,629. A gratifying feature of this increase was that our exclusions were remarkably few and amounted to only sixty-eight. Our financial operations for the year were remarkably favourable. Income amounted to £3,897, being at the rate of £2 7s. 10d. per member. Expenditure reached a total of £1,812, or £1 2s. 8d. per member, being less than half of our proportionate expenses for the previous year; and our gain of £2,079 added to our balance at the beginning of the year gave us a total balance at the close of 1888 of £4,164, or £2 11s. 1½d. per member.

This year was certainly the most successful in our history, the addition to our funds of £1 per member giving the society a financial stability which it had never possessed before, and so paving the way to that development in numbers and influence which is absolutely essential to a well-governed and effective trade organisation.

It was during this year that we fairly grappled with our management deficiency, our income from all sources amounting to £223 over our expenditure, and reducing our deficit to £612. These are matters which do not concern us now, as we have long since abolished the division of our contributions into different funds. But thirty years ago the deficiency to our various funds was a matter of considerable anxiety to the officers who were charged with central administration; and the steady decrease in our various deficiencies was invariably a subject for congratulation. It is rather remarkable that during this year we had not a single tool claim.

1889.

The general condition of trade throughout the year was very good, our percentage of unemployment only amounting to 1.5. As a natural consequence our wages movements were

general, and as a rule fairly successful. During this period we took a firm stand against being rushed on to the streets owing to the tactics of contemporary societies who initiated a wages movement, decided on all question of detail, then asked our co-operation. This policy was adopted on the Mid-Tyne, when a quite unnecessary strike was called by the A.S.E. in which we were invited to join. With a few exceptions our members remained at work. The movement extended to the upper reaches of the river, where, wisdom having come through experience, the sectional societies were invited to co-operate, which they did and, being in the majority, took charge of the movement and brought it to a successful issue without a strike, 2s. being conceded. The sectional societies by this time coalesced under the title of the "Federal Board," and had quite a long, if somewhat chequered, existence.

The A.S.E. having obtained what they wanted on Mid-Tyne, after a three weeks' strike, shortly afterwards applied for a further advance, the Federal Board standing out; and there seemed every likelihood of a strike with one half of the skilled craftsmen working. However, the matter was settled by the A.S.E. accepting an immediate 1s. the first pay in February and a second advance for a similar amount the first pay in May, accompanied by an undertaking not to ask for a further advance that year. The Federal Board accepted the second 1s. the last pay in May, but without any pledge as to future applications, which, it may be said, they were not in a position to make without the co-operation of the larger society. All these tactics, which might have been avoided by the exercise of a little tact and forbearance, seem very paltry in these more enlightened days. But the whole episode created considerable ill-feeling and jealousy at the time, and had an effect which reached a much wider area than where these happenings took place.

Our Leeds Branch fixed a minimum rate, established it, then went in for an all-round 2s. advance, and by taking the firms in detail succeeded in their object; from which incident we may take it that they lived in happier times thirty years ago than we do now. We were successful in obtaining an advance of 1d. per hour throughout the Clyde area in two instalments, a few members having to be

withdrawn in Paisley owing to one or two employers wishing to restrict their concession to $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per hour. We had similar difficulties at Coatbridge. A general strike took place at Hull, in which we were involved. It lasted three weeks, when 2s. was conceded. A similar movement took place at Keighley. A joint committee of our trade, representing the A.S.E., S.E.M., and our society, was successful in raising our minimum rate in Manchester to 38s. and in Liverpool to 36s. per week, and on the Mersey we co-operated in a general movement which secured the payment of one and a-half time for the first four hours' overtime, every day to stand by itself.

An unpleasant incident took place at Darlington, where we obtained the co-operation of the A.S.E. and non-society men in an application for an advance. The employers refused to grant our demand, and our quondam allies abandoned their claim and allowed our members to lift their tools. Little wonder that when the A.S.E. asked our co-operation in a strike at one firm in Erith against piecework and the employment of labourers at certain machines after they had gone out on strike our reply was distinctly in the negative.

By far our most important dispute during the year was at Barrow against joiners working at ship patternmaking. This had been the practice at the yard for some years, where a separate department existed in the shipyard manned chiefly by joiners. We successfully resisted a joiner being placed at the head of this patternshop, but agreed that joiners should continue to make hawse pipe, timber heads, and other rough patterns, but the firm tacked on to this list stems, sterns, rudder frames, propeller brackets, and the like, which we strongly resented and made representations to the Amalgamated Carpenters and Joiners that this practice should be stopped. We obtained no satisfaction, so the whole of our members stopped work, claiming that all patternmaking be done by members of our trade. We had to stay out three weeks before this right was conceded, and this strike has undoubtedly been the means of establishing our claims in every shipyard of any importance throughout the country. The humiliating feature of this conflict was that we were fighting a large and powerful Trade Union, who announced their intention of defending their rights (?) to the bitter end, and who were compelled by force and not influenced by reason

and justice to relinquish an impossible position. We had several other disputes with regard to joiners during this year, notably at Kilmarnock Coatbridge, Dundee, South Shields, Sunderland, and Birkenhead. At Liverpool and Birkenhead the A.S.E. and ourselves formed a compact, the essence of which was to eliminate the non-society element from our trade. It is doubtful if we wholly succeeded in Liverpool, but we certainly did so in the "City of the future." About the same time Preston made a clearance of their last non-society man.

A proposal from Liverpool and Birkenhead to alter the rules so as to admit Trade Protection members was made, which, on being put to the vote, was carried by 558 to 262 votes. As there were not nearly enough votes cast to carry this addition to our constitution, the matter had perforce to lie over until a general alteration of rules took place. At the same time the Kilmarnock Branch tried to excise the compulsory removal of General Office from our rules. The voting was : 325 for ; 501 against.

At this time we made our first venture in investing our surplus funds in a security which offered a better rate of interest than the trifle we were getting from the banks. The society was practically unanimous in authorising the investment of £1,000 for the benefit of the Superannuation Fund, which, after a lot of consideration and advice, we put in the Clyde Trust Funded Debt at 3 per cent., an investment we have regretted ever since.

At the end of the year an old friend disappeared in the shape of the 3d. per week levy, which had continued so long as to be regarded almost as a permanent institution. The E.C. took advantage of this reduction in our total income to put on a levy for the Tool Fund sufficient to clear off its indebtedness to the General Funds. It amounted to 2d. per week for the first quarter of the succeeding year.

During the year the A.S.E. showed some activity in trying to organise our trade by issuing a circular to non-society patternmakers inviting them to join their organisation. At that time we were always on the look-out for an opportunity of this kind and promptly took up what we regarded as a challenge, and issued a printed counterblast, which was scattered somewhat generously amongst our branches. It

is questionable whether either obtained a single new member as a direct result of these epistolary effusions. For organising purposes our trade is as little susceptible to the influences of pamphleteering as it is to soap-box oratory.

As a result of the year's efforts to improve our workshop conditions, we find that our average rate of wages increased from £1 12s. 9½d. to £1 14s. 4d., a difference of 1s. 6½d., the proportion of advance varying from 1s. to 4s. 6d. per week, which was at that time considered exceedingly satisfactory.

During the year we opened six new branches, two of them—Lochee and Airdrie—being of rather doubtful standing; at any rate they survived just a little longer than the period during which the special privilege of a reduced scale of entrance fee was continued, and in due course were quietly absorbed into Dundee and Coatbridge respectively. The number of our branches at the end of the year was fifty. Our membership continued to increase very satisfactorily, 414 new entrants being recorded, the largest number in any one year up to that time. Our total membership stood at 1,968, a gain of 339 over the year—another record. Financially we were just as successful. Our income amounted to £4,700, or £2 7s. 9d. per member, the same proportionate income as the year before. Expenditure reached £1,857, or 18s. 10½d. per member, being 3s. 9d. per member less than in 1888, our gain for the year amounting to £2,842, which, added to our balance brought forward, gave a total balance of £7,006, or £3 11s. 2¾d. per member. As was the case in the previous year we gained at the rate of £1 per member during 1889. Our management expenses continued on the down grade and cost 6s. 7¼d. per member, the lowest proportionate cost in our history, and our deficiency to this fund was reduced to £55, which was wiped out during the first quarter of the succeeding year.

1890.

Trade showed a considerable falling off during this year, and although never what could be described as "bad," there was little buoyancy in it and no general demand for men which could not be easily met from local sources. Wages movements were not quite so numerous as during the previous year

and were chiefly confined to those backward districts which, either through lack of opportunity or lack of interest, had not taken steps to institute wages movements when the demand for labour was far beyond our powers of supply.

The only attempt to reduce wages was at Greenock, where $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per hour advance had been obtained, and where the employers posted a notice for that amount of reduction. They ultimately withdrew the notice, at the same time undertaking when they again went on the war-path they would limit their demand to $\frac{1}{4}$ d. ! This little incident—doubtless anticipatory of what was coming—did not deter our members from putting in for a further $\frac{1}{2}$ d. advance in order to establish a differential rate of that amount between our trade and the other sections of engineers. The employers acknowledged that we were entitled to a differential rate, and offered $\frac{1}{4}$ d., which was subsequently accepted as an instalment. At Liverpool and Birkenhead we established a rate of 37s. in associated and 38s. in non-associated shops, in spite of the fact that the A.S.E. refused to join us on the ground that we had declined to co-operate with their society at Erith in regard to the piece-work and manning of machines question.

Birmingham and Smethwick carried through a successful movement for 2s. advance, Leeds members obtaining a similar advance, in association with the general body of workmen, and our Swansea members succeeded in obtaining for their Landore members an advance of 2s., or a 1s. below the Swansea rate. On the Tyne our members fixed their minimum at 37s., and got it without any serious difficulty. Other wages movements, of which the foregoing are typical, do not call for special comment.

The most important movement in which we were concerned during the year was in connection with the 12 o'clock Saturday and the consequent reduction of the hours from fifty-four to fifty-three. This was the first attempt to interfere with the nine-hour day since its institution in 1871, so it cannot be said to have been either hasty or premature. The history of this movement is much more interesting than edifying. A general application was being made throughout the North-East Coast for an advance of wages of 2s. per week, the A.S.E. applying on behalf of their members and the Tyne Federal Board looking after the interests of the sectional

societies in that district. The A.S.E. on Mid-Tyne, however, supplemented their wages application by demands for the curtailment of systematic overtime, modification of the character note, and a reduction of hours by one per week, so as to obtain a 12 o'clock Saturday. They also refused to associate with the Federal Board, who, being left out in the cold, had no other alternative than to watch the course of events and be prepared to spring whichever way the cat jumped.

The movement spread throughout the North-East Coast area and outside the Mid-Tyne area. Joint committees were formed and the co-operation of all concerned was secured. The employers took up a very strong attitude and absolutely refused to interfere with the hours. They did something more. They were just as determined not to deal with their employés in sections, and they succeeded where the unions had failed in welding together the different interests representing the organised workmen. They then made an offer of 1s. per week advance and to stop at noon on Saturday, where the workmen wished it, the hour to be worked up during the week. This offer was submitted to a ballot vote of the whole district and rejected, 4,501 voting for and 6,604 against. A strike took place on March 15th, 214 of our members being involved, and concluded on March 24th, through the intervention of the Mayor of Newcastle, the fifty-three hours being conceded as from May 10th. As a sop, the men made some supposed concessions regarding the curtailment of holidays. The concession of the 12 o'clock Saturday and 53 hours per week was subsequently extended to most of the engineering centres throughout the kingdom, with the exception of Scotland, and generally without much more trouble than the asking for it.

We had the usual squabbles regarding joiners working at our trade. They extended to quite a number of districts and were generally successful, the most important being at Jarrow, where a number of joiners were making ship patterns on a fifty-four-hour week basis. Two of our members were started and at once demanded the 12 o'clock Saturday. This was granted, but they did not last long, and were discharged. There the matter would have ended had not our members in the engine shop of the same firm taken up the cudgels on behalf of our trade. They were assisted by the A.S.E. The

position was complicated by the fact that the joiners had come out on strike against an award made by Mr. Thomas Burt, M.P., in respect of demarcation differences between their trade and the shipwrights. We certainly did not allow this circumstance to deter us from claiming our rights in the Tyne shipyards, and in respect of the Jarrow dispute we, in concert with the A.S.E., fixed up an agreement in which all patternmaking was allocated to our trade. Five joiners who were then on strike but who had worked at ship patternmaking for a number of years were allowed to continue, provided they returned to their work within a stated period, the A.S.E. and ourselves to supply men alternately and a foreman patternmaker to be appointed. We also secured the patternmaking for our trade in all shipyards where there was sufficient work to employ one of our trade, and our right to our own work has never been challenged in that district since.

We dealt with a somewhat similar situation on the Wear at this time in a way which perhaps is not so open to criticism. A firm in Sunderland paid off three of our members because they objected to the occasional employment of joiners at our trade. We brought the matter before the Sunderland Federal Board, co-opting the A.S.E. for the occasion, and after a long discussion, the joiners conceded our right to make patterns and undertook to refrain from poaching on our preserve, whilst it was mutually agreed that the question of which trade should bush propeller tubes, clead cylinders, and make pipe templates be submitted to arbitration.

Harking back to the joiners v. shipwrights' strike, in which we, in common with other trades, had a vital interest, it is interesting to recall that it was finally settled by a Conciliation Board representing the various trades concerned and formed at the instance of the Mayor of Newcastle, when it was decided that the joiners return to work, that each side submit sixteen objections to the Burt Award, which would be dealt with by the Board immediately work had been resumed. Your General Secretary was appointed Acting Chairman, and the strike, after dragging on for several months, was settled, as should have been the case at the beginning, by a round-table conference.

At the beginning of the year we were invited to join a Federation of the Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades, then

in course of formation, at the instance of the Boilermakers and Shipwrights' Societies. We were not represented at the preliminary meeting owing to an oversight, but at that meeting a provisional constitution was approved, and we were invited to affiliate. This invitation was accepted by 663 votes for, to 223 against, and we have been associated with that organisation ever since, your General Secretary being appointed Honorary Secretary at the first Annual Meeting, which position he held for twenty-seven years, until the office was made permanent.

During this year the question of a legal eight-hour day came prominently to the front. It had been somewhat hotly debated at several Trades Union Congresses and had been turned down, your delegate to that body voting with the majority. The Woolwich Branch, however, very properly considered that the views of the members should be tested on what was certainly the most important question debated by the Congress, and a vote of the members was taken, when, by 495 votes to 198, the society declared against Parliamentary interference with the hours of labour !

A rather curious incident took place at Stockton at the beginning of this year, where, in the largest shop, an A.S.E. patternmaker turned over to us. This caused deep resentment amongst the local members of that organisation, and they decided to demand the dismissal of our recruit under threat of a strike. We at once communicated with the headquarters of the A.S.E. and received a reply to the effect that the matter had already been dealt with and no strike would be sanctioned ; their view being that every man had a right to join the Trade Union of his choice, and that it was the desire of the E.C. of the A.S.E. that the members of our trade in each society should combine for the common good and regard the non-society man as a common enemy. We gladly give prominence to these excellent sentiments expressed over thirty years ago.

A burning question at this time was that relating to over-age members. The propriety of admitting these men as Trade Protection members was raised by the Newcastle Branch, who, in a reasoned statement, gave their reasons for making adequate provision for their admission and status in the society. A resolution approving the principle involved was

carried by 1,110 to 218 votes, but as we had not the necessary majority—nor were we likely to obtain it—the E.C.C. decided the matter must lie over until the next general alteration of rules.

Considering the number of wages movements we were engaged in during 1890, an average increase of 8d., from £1 14s. 4d. to £1 15s. per week, appears to be a very insignificant result for a considerable amount of effort. We have to remember, however, that one-fourth of our members had obtained a reduction of hours without any interference with their wage rate, and that a considerable proportion of our activities were diverted from wages to hours. So, after all, our workshop conditions were improved to a much greater extent than is indicated by the increase in our average wage rate.

Our percentage of unemployed members was 2.2., as compared with 1.5 in 1889.

Two new branches were added to our roll during the year, giving us a total of fifty-two. Our membership continued to increase steadily, 348 new members being admitted and eighty-three excluded, and we had a gain of 237, our total at the end of the year reaching 2,205. Our total income amounted to £4,900, or £2 7s. 9d. per member, and expenditure to £3,104, or £1 8s. 1½d. per member, giving us a gain of £1,796, our total balance amounting to £8,803, or £3 19s. 10d. per member.

The year 1890 was certainly a most successful period for our society. We not only chronicled a substantial gain in membership and funds, but we commenced to emerge from the obscurity which had enshrouded us up to that time, and took our place definitely and prominently in activities which were working for the betterment of the industry of which we were a part.

This year saw the completion of the six years' sojourn in Glasgow, and for the second time in our history the seat of government was transferred from a district in which it was doing excellent work. Manchester having succeeded in obtaining a majority of votes at the first time of asking, Glasgow, under the then code of rules, not being any longer eligible.

1891.

Trade was not so good during this year, our percentage of unemployed amounting to 3.8. Advances in wages were pretty general, although small in amount, ranging from 1s. to 2s. per week. Only one attempt to reduce wages appears to have been made, a small firm in Birmingham demanding a reduction of 2s. per week, and, on the withdrawal of our members, filling their patternshop with non-society men. We had wages disputes at Coatbridge and Middlesbrough. In both instances we invoked the assistance of the Federation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades, but beyond receiving a somewhat watered expression of sympathy and the appointment of a deputation to visit Middlesbrough we received no assistance from that body. In both cases joiners were brought in to take the places of the strikers, and eventually the dispute died of inanition.

At Belfast we succeeded in obtaining an advance of $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per hour for the whole trade. A few weeks afterwards the A.S.E. followed our excellent example and received a 1s. advance for all their members, except patternmakers, who indignantly protested against their exclusion from the new arrangement; but their protestations were in vain, and as a result most of them joined our society. A good deal of friction existed between the two societies about this time. We were pilloried in the A.S.E. Monthly Report for forcing our members to remain at work whilst all other workmen came out on strike from a London firm, and it was pointed out that this was our second offence in that district. It was the old story: we were never consulted beforehand, and the question at issue, the boring of a hydraulic ram, had nothing whatever to do with us, and, moreover, our local members were unanimously opposed to interfering in the dispute, and gave the most explicit undertaking of non-intervention that it was possible to conceive.

The most important movement of the year was the application of the fifty-three-hour week to various centres in England. It was not always plain sailing, and in several instances men had to be withdrawn before this concession was made, but on the whole little friction ensued when applications for the 12 o'clock Saturday were made in a conciliatory spirit, and practically the whole of the districts working under this

STANDARD P.E.
JAN 1907



*Thos. Goodall Manchester.
1891-2.*



*Jos. W. Field Manchester
1892-3*



*Jos Taylor Manchester.
1893-4.*



*Wm Williams Manchester.
1894-5.*



*Fred W. Kent Manchester.
1895-6.*



*John Mills Manchester.
1896-7-1909-13.
Asst. General Secretary 1917.*

**E.C. PRESIDENTS,
1892-1909.**

arrangement up to the last reduction of hours obtained the concession during 1891.

Another very important movement was the attempt to abolish systematic overtime on the North-East Coast. As the result of the jealousy and squabbling amongst the various societies the question was hung up for an unconscionable time. At times it appeared to have been relegated to the limbo of forgotten things. However, towards the end of the year the various bodies concerned got together and gingered up the movement, with the result that an offer was received from the local employers' association limiting the hours on new work to sixty-five per week, which on a ballot vote was rejected. Outbreaks occurred at various firms, with the result that the employers proceeded to pay off 25 per cent. of their workmen, with an intimation that the process would be repeated until the shops were cleared. This process was obligingly precipitated by the men, who came out in a body, some 12,000 workmen being involved. The matter was now becoming serious, and owing to the intervention of the Mayor of Newcastle—when a slight modification of the previous offer was made, to the effect that no man be asked to work more than sixty-five hours per week, or 230 hours in any four weeks, the words "on new work" being excised—these altered terms were accepted by 3,511 to 2,920 votes, and the strike ended, having lasted a week. There was really no enthusiasm amongst the rank and file to abolish overtime. Most of them were too anxious to get it. As a matter of fact, the whole affair, which dragged on for eighteen months, was a case of "much cry and little wool," as the restrictions (?) were virtually abandoned by all the trades except ours almost as soon as an agreement was reached.

The annual vote upon the question of holding a Council meeting resulted in a majority of eight being cast in the affirmative. As the rules limited the functions of that body to appeals, and as no appeal had been sent in, the E.C.C. pointed out that our rules were very much in need of amendment, and that our stock of rule books was exhausted. They therefore proposed an addition to the rules, authorising the General Council to alter and amend the rules in accordance with the existing procedure for sending in proposals for complete amendment. A two-thirds majority of our total

membership was required, and the E.C.C. warned the branches that unless this proportion of votes was recorded the Council meeting would not be held; and every latitude was given to the recording of votes. The necessary majority was secured, and it was decided that the meeting be held in Manchester, where the elected locality for the future seat of government was.

We did not add to the number of our branches, which stood as in the previous year at fifty-two, one branch being closed and another opened. Our membership, however, showed its usual upward tendency, 258 new members being admitted and 114 excluded, our total membership at the end of the year being 2,314. Our financial transactions were equally satisfactory. Income from all sources realised £5,587, or £2 8s. 3½d. per member. Expenditure totalled £4,047, or £1 14s. 11½d. per member, and our gain of £1,539, added to our balance from 1890, gave us our first five-figure total balance of £10,342, or £4 9s. 4½d. per member. It is interesting to note that the Cinderella of our separate funds—the Management Fund—was at the end of the year in so healthy a condition as to show a favourable balance of £772.

1892.

Trade throughout this year was dull, and we had an average unemployed roll of 191 per month, with a percentage of 7.8, which was the highest since 1886. As a consequence we were unable to undertake any important movement to increase wages. The prevailing dulness was accentuated by a demarcation dispute on the Tyne between fitters and plumbers. We have no knowledge of any similar disputes between these two trades having existed prior to 1892, but we do know that they have been at it ever since, and are continuing the good work at the time of writing. We were not directly affected by the strike of fitters, except as victims, but there is no doubt that this squabble accelerated the depression in trade, which was rapidly developing at the beginning of that year.

Our activities for better conditions were confined to an extension of the fifty-three hours to such districts in England as had not to that date adopted this curtailment. The results were, however, disappointing, as the workmen were not in a position to exercise any influence other than moral suasion.

A perfunctory attempt was also made to restrict systematic overtime. As it is improbable that any was being worked it is difficult to see why the employers opposed what was at the time a purely academic proposal, except on the ground that they looked for better days in the future. There was little real effort put forward, and the results were commensurate with the manner in which these sporadic movements were carried on. At Hull, however, we did manage to do something in the way of limiting apprentices, a question that had been avoided since the Sunderland failure, eight years previously. The principal shop employed twelve apprentices, and a deputation from our local branch succeeded in inducing the firm to make that number seven in due course, patternmakers' sons to have the preference. A curious custom existed then by which apprentices to our trade had a preliminary training in the drawing office.

During the year we had an experience at Belfast unparalleled in our experience either before or since, and which, so far as we know, has never had its counterpart in the Trade Union movement. Our local branch applied for the modest advance of 1s. per week, were refused, and sought the co-operation of the A.S.E. patternmakers before any further steps were taken. We did not succeed in obtaining the assistance of the local District Committee, and as feeling ran somewhat high a request was made from our General Office that if it was necessary to cease work in order to enforce this demand their patternmakers should accompany ours on to the streets, and if this was impossible, that an undertaking be given that if our men came out their places would not be filled by A.S.E. patternmakers. This latter request might quite reasonably have been regarded as something of a deliberate insult, but such was not the case, and the required pledge was given and our members came out on strike accompanied by six A.S.E. members and a few non-society men.

Two or three days afterwards every employer in Belfast received a communication from the local District Committee asking if they required patternmakers that body was prepared to supply them. The offer was gladly accepted and men commenced to come over by every boat. Several were captured by our pickets and turned back, but quite a number started work. We naturally used every possible effort to stop the

ingress of these aliens and to ascertain the reason for this extraordinary somersault on the part of the E.C. of the A.S.E., who at once assumed full responsibility, stating that they had been guided by their local Committee, who had informed them that our members had declared their intention not to return to work unless the A.S.E. members who had stayed in were discharged. This statement, as might be conjectured, let loose a perfect avalanche of charges, counter-charges, demands for inquiry, explanatory pamphlets, and it was months before the dust we made was laid. It was made quite clear that our members never made any such threat, although it might have been true that some individual, probably in his cups, said something which aroused the indignation of someone else, probably in similar condition. We received no satisfaction from the A.S.E., and we were not allowed to state our case to a delegate meeting, which was being held in Leeds at the time, nor were we allowed to give evidence before a whitewashing committee of five, who were appointed by that body. So we set to and issued pamphlets setting forth the facts with appropriate deductions broadcast throughout the Trade Union movement, and which proved excellent propaganda for our society.

Your delegate to the Trades Union Congress succeeded in passing a resolution amending the Standing Orders so as to secure the expulsion of any society who deliberately black-legged another, and taking advantage of his opportunity he narrated as much of the Belfast incident as his limited time allowed. Altogether we profited by this affair to an altogether unlooked for extent, and secured an advertisement which was most useful to us in our propaganda work. Quite a number of A.S.E. members turned over to us, and our members at large were stimulated in their work of organisation, with the happiest possible results to our association.

The movement for an advance was abandoned. The greater majority of our members returned to work, and those who were left speedily obtained employment elsewhere, whilst the imported men quietly and unostentatiously disappeared to where they came from, and the breach was healed shortly after in a complete and quiet fashion when the A.S.E. District Committee invited our local branch to co-operate with them in connection with a demand by the employers for a reduction

of wages, one of our representatives being appointed secretary of the Joint Committee. A reduction of 1s. per week was ultimately accepted.

As might be expected, the employers, especially in the shipbuilding and marine centres, took advantage of their opportunities to enforce reductions in wages. No general and uniform scale was attempted, and the amounts varied from 1s. to 2s. per week. Every effort was made to secure a modification or withdrawal of the employers' demands with a fair amount of success, and only one strike took place, the engineering trades at Barrow coming out in somewhat ragged formation. The North-East Coast settlement of 1s. 6d. reduction in two instalments was subsequently accepted. Slightly better terms were obtained in Hull, where the second instalment of a demand for 2s. reduction was withdrawn when a strike appeared imminent.

The depressed conditions did not prevent our never-ending warfare against joiners working at our trade. It seemed extraordinary that when there was an abundance of patternmakers available some employers insisted in trying to introduce outsiders into their patternshops; but such was the case, and in no instance were they successful when, as generally happened, our members showed their willingness to back up their protests by lifting their tools.

The number of members on the books towards the end of the year was so great as to excite the practical sympathy of those who were working, and for the first time in our history an attempt to supplement the benefit of our members on Trade Benefit by the creation of a special fund was attempted. Suggestions were made from the Tyne, Smethwick, and Woolwich, which the E.C.C. crystalised in a proposal to impose a levy of 6d. per week for the first three months of 1893 upon all free members in work. This proposed new departure was ignominiously defeated, 342 voting for, and 868 against, 48 per cent. of our total membership having voted. It is only fair to state that some of the branches had voluntarily levied themselves to assist their own unemployed, an example which the E.C.C. strongly commended to the branches as a whole.

As a contrast, during the year we again took a vote as to whether our delegate to Congress should support the principle of a legal eight-hour day. The result was an indication that

the question had not the least interest for our members, 171 voting for, and 147 against, not one half of the branches voting—a striking contrast to the foregoing vote upon a supplementary benefit to our unemployed members.

A strong effort was made during the year to have an emblem, and the branches were invited to express their views on this question and also intimate the number they could dispose of amongst their members. A fair response was made, but ultimately the E.C.C. decided that the condition of trade did not justify this venture.

We were invited to give evidence before the Royal Commission on Labour and requested the branches to forward any grievances they wished to place before that body. The response was very meagre. Woolwich asked that the question of “black” shops doing Government work be brought before the Commission, whilst Edinburgh and Leith and Blackburn suggested the character note system as an appropriate question for ventilation before that body. We concentrated on the Woolwich suggestion with no immediate result, although the three firms complained of have long ago disappeared from the London district.

The year 1892 has other claims to distinction other than those already referred to, as during that year we had our first claim for Superannuation Benefit, a Leeds member who had transferred with the old Leeds Society being the first claimant.

During the year we held a Council meeting in Manchester, when our rules were subjected to considerable alteration, the amended code coming into operation at the beginning of January, 1893.

Hampered, as we were, by dull trade during 1892 our record of progress cannot but be considered as entirely satisfactory. Four new branches were added to our roll, which now reached fifty-six. Our gain in membership was equally satisfactory, 337 new members having been recorded; our exclusions numbering ninety-three, both figures being a considerable improvement upon those of the previous year. Our gain in membership was 223, and our total 2,537. Financially we did not do quite so well. Our total income amounted to £6,000, and we spent £195 in excess of this sum, our funds

suffering a corresponding diminution. They still stood at the exceedingly healthy level of £10,146, or £4 per member. In computing our financial position during any stated period we are too apt to draw our conclusions from the figures representing actual gain or loss and ignore the causes which create an actual deficiency and the benefits which have accrued to the members whose circumstances were the cause of a working loss. Our deficiency for 1892 was caused by abnormally bad trade, and we dispensed in Donation £3,079, or £1 9s. 2½d. per member, this benefit was paid to 1,235 members, or practically half of our total, and cost each working member 8½d. per week.

1893.

The new rules as amended by the General Council meeting, which met in Manchester in June, 1892, came into operation at the beginning of 1893. The following are the chief alterations effected at that meeting. The preface was re-written, and whilst we retained our motto, the text was made more particular than general :—

Contributions were fixed at 1s. per week, and the subdivision of the weekly contribution was abolished, whilst the E.C. were given discretionary power as to submitting a proposal for a levy to the members and were compelled to state whether they approved of any levy which was submitted to a vote of the society.

Trade Benefit at the maximum rate of 10s. per week was granted for fourteen weeks instead of twelve. The second scale of 7s. was similarly altered, and the third scale of 5s. for twelve weeks was raised to 6s. for twenty-four weeks, the maximum amount payable being increased from £13 4s. in any yearly period to £19 2s.

A new rule was introduced dealing with members on travel, the chief feature of which was an allowance of 9d. per night bed money. This rule did not supply a long-felt want, and although a few claims on this benefit were made they were very few indeed, the number of peripatetic patternmakers in this society being exceedingly limited.

Sick Benefit was altered by the addition of a third scale of benefit, 4s. per week being granted for fifty-two weeks

after benefit for two periods of twenty-six weeks had been exhausted.

The old Benevolent Fund, which was raised by levy and administered by the E.C.C., was superseded by the institution of a Contingent Fund, also raised by levy, but having for its objects the payment of an additional benefit to members engaged in a dispute, Victimisation Benefit and Accident Benefit of from £50 to £100, this latter in place of the uneven and unsatisfactory custom of granting an incapacitated member the product of a levy voted by the members. In addition, the fund was used for making special grants to members in distressed circumstances.

The Tool Benefit rule was altered by an increase of the yearly levy of 6d. to double that sum, and the E.C. were empowered to transfer any balance over 5s. per member to the General Fund, provided the members so decided by vote, a clause wholly honoured in the breach.

The Superannuation rule was altered so as to limit the payment of double contribution to those joining from other societies who were allowed to date back to the time of their entry into their original society. Ordinary members who had paid extra contribution prior to January 1st, 1886, were allowed to continue, but the maximum time of dating back was limited to ten years, and it is improbable that half-a-dozen members have received any benefit from this scheme of double superannuation payments.

The administrative alterations in the rules were few and, with one or two exceptions, comparatively unimportant. No alteration was made in the appointment, duties, and emoluments of branch officers, except that a treasurer received a minimum salary of 10s. per year, and an assistant secretary was authorised.

The central administration was altered by the establishment of a General Council of seven members, to be elected by the grouped branches, the old Executive Council being changed to a delegate meeting, whose duties were confined to alterations of rules. The new body was an appeal tribunal, and had the right to revise all precedents and interpretations of rules instituted by the Executive Committee, and they met when the members by a two-thirds majority decided that sufficient

business of importance had accumulated to justify a meeting; but it was stipulated that an interval of at least one year must lapse between meetings.

The title of the E.C.C. was changed by the dropping of one "C," representing the word "Council."

An important change was effected in the rule relating to seat of government, the words "and that it be not allowed to remain in one district more than two periods of three years in succession" being deleted.

A clause was inserted in the District Committee rule stipulating that if the E.C. refused to sanction the formation of such a body they must state reason in the next Monthly Report, when, if the applicants are not satisfied, they could submit the matter to a vote of the members.

A new rule relating to our representation on Joint Committees was agreed to, due provision being made for the previous sanction of the E.C. before any branch formed what might prove an entangling alliance by an unauthorised affiliation with one of these bodies.

The condition of trade during 1893 was very depressed, our average out-of-work members reaching 241, the highest aggregate shown in our tables to that date. The percentage was 9.1, the highest since 1886. So the circumstances were not propitious for any attempt being made to improve general conditions.

It is worthy of record that in a few districts our members proved superior to their environment and made some levelling up attempts to improve wage rates. Glasgow declared for the establishment of a minimum rate of 7½d. per hour, and a firm at Bridgeton was selected as being an appropriate object upon which to concentrate our forces. The rejoinder we received was an intimation that our wages would be dropped 3s. per week, and to emphasise this threat several patternmakers were summarily discharged, the remainder, with three exceptions, lifting their tools at the same time. The joiners, who were on strike throughout the district, very kindly assisted us with the picketing, and after an offer to pay the rate to certain selected men had been refused the firm capitulated and reinstated all the men who cared to return

at the 7½d. per hour rate, several other firms in the district following suit, so far as recognising this rate was concerned.

Another attempt at Parton was not so successful, an application for 2s. advance on a 30s. per week rate resulting in a strike of three Barrow members and two non-society men, which petered out in a few weeks. Johnstone succeeded in establishing a 30s. minimum without striking.

We had also the usual friction against the introduction of joiners into our trade, Kirkcaldy, Dundee, and Liverpool having been the localities where this innovation was objected to by our members.

At Sunderland we had a protracted strike against the introduction of a wood turner into a patternshop. A settlement was ultimately effected by an undertaking from the firm that when he died or left they would not replace him except by a member of our trade; a promise we had the utmost difficulty in inducing the firm to implement some years later.

A large number of reductions of wages were enforced during the year, generally without a strike. At Erith the demand by one firm was for 4s. per week, and the dispute ended by the payment of 9d. per hour to four selected men, an advance of 6d. per week over the rates previously paid. At Middlesbrough a reduction was accepted by all classes of workmen at the chief firm, except our trade, whose rates would have been reduced to 30s. 4d. per week. The dispute evidently became merged in the general settlement on the North-East Coast.

At Kilmarnock a reduction of 1s. per week was enforced against all workmen employed in engineering work, with the exception of one firm, where we were well organised and where the reduction, so far as our trade was concerned, was not enforced.

The notice of reduction on the North-East Coast created the usual squabble between the A.S.E. and the sectional trades, who suggested the formation of a Central Wages Board. The A.S.E. declined, and drew first blood by settling with the Employers' Association for a 2s. per week reduction in two equal instalments. The remaining unions, however, succeeded in improving upon that settlement, so far as the lower-paid men were concerned, the maximum reduction being limited to those having 30s. and over; 1s. 6d. was imposed

on all down to 25s., and 1s. to such as had less than that amount per week, the three scales of reduction being taken off in two instalments. These terms were rejected by our members and the moulders, but were accepted on a second ballot.

At Barrow these terms were improved on, 1s. 6d. on rates 25s. and over, and 6d. for such as were paid below 25s. being accepted. At Stockton we managed to get off with 1s. 6d. in one shop and 1s. in another. But generally the foregoing reductions were imposed throughout the North-East Coast.

Belfast employers demanded Clyde rates for that district, but ultimately agreed on 1s. reduction deferred for three months.

The net result of these various reductions was paltry enough, in all conscience, our average rates being reduced by $3\frac{3}{4}$ d. per week only, our average rate over the whole society being £1 14s. $1\frac{1}{4}$ d.

During the year we initiated a movement against the employment of shipwrights at our trade in the Royal Dockyards. After some little delay we obtained the co-operation of the A.S.E., and this movement, after several years' effort, ultimately succeeded in its object. As an offset, another Department of the State—Woolwich Arsenal—introduced the eight-hour-day into that establishment, so the Government are fully entitled to the credit of taking the lead in an industrial reform which easily holds first place as an ideal to be aimed at and which has been the subject of incessant and continuous agitation for the last thirty-five years, and has not yet been generally consummated, and never will be.

An attempt to introduce piecework into the patternshop of a small firm in Ulverston was successfully resisted.

The question of an emblem again came up, and by a vote of the members the E.C.C. were authorised to use their own discretion in regard to it. The triennial vote on the locality for the seat of government for an ensuing period of three years was not decided until three votes had been taken, when Manchester somewhat easily retained its position.

We opened two new branches during the year, raising our total number to fifty-seven. Our admission of new members

numbered 342, twenty-one being Trade Protection members. Whilst the aggregate number of entrants was excellent, the admissions of over-age recruits were distinctly disappointing. For years a constant demand had been made to open the door to those who for some reason had been denied the right of entry as ordinary members because of age or physical disability. The terms were made easy, the delegate meeting was unanimous, and the result was and, as a matter of fact, has been paltry in the extreme.

It is surprising how easily our members were stirred to a condition bordering on panic in regard to the admission of candidates not covered by our rules. Immediately after the issue of our 1892 code of rules one of our branches discovered that the A.S.E. had just altered their rule so as to admit young men into their society at 18 years of age, and urging that we follow their example, although there was an embargo in the rules against any alteration before 31st December, 1895. Opinions were asked from the branches, and it is surprising to note the number in favour of flattering our contemporary by imitation. The E.C., however, declined to ignore our own rule on this point, and it is questionable if we lost a dozen recruits by our conservative policy.

During 1893 we excluded 106 members, our gain being 190, and our total membership at the end of the year was 2,727.

The abolition of the separate funds under the new rules simplified our system of bookkeeping. Although it was satisfactory to quite a number of our members that when the change actually took place each fund was in a solvent condition, even the Management Fund having nearly £1,000 to its credit.

Our income for the year amounted to £6,860, being at the rate of £2 10s. 3½d. per member, and our expenditure to £7,286, or £2 13s. 5½d. per member. For the second year in succession we lost on the year's transactions; our loss for 1893 being £426, which left us with the still substantial balance of £9,726, or £3 11s. 3½d. per member. It may be noted that the Unemployment Benefit amounted to £4,671, or £1 14s. 3d. per member, this average cost having been twice exceeded—in 1879 and 1886.

The year opened with somewhat better prospects than we had experienced for some time. Our unemployed roll was slowly but steadily diminishing, and although very few branches had a clear vacant book there was considerable movement amongst our out-of-work members, and anticipation ran somewhat high that we had experienced the worst, and might reasonably expect a real improvement in the general condition of trade. Under these circumstances it was to be expected that the minds of our members would turn expectantly to thoughts of increased wages.

The first in the field were our North-East Coast members, and they were accorded the position of the fighting unit by the society at large. It was not difficult to fix on a sum : 3s. 6d. had been taken off their rates, so the restitution of that amount was demanded by our Tyne members. Sunderland at once placed themselves in line, whilst Stockton and Hartlepool were content to limit their demands to 2s., which was asked by the whole engineering trade. Undoubtedly some stimulus was given to our demand owing to the circumstance that the moulders had applied for an advance, received a refusal, and had decided on a strike. As a matter of fact, at one time it appeared to be a race as to who should be on the streets first. At all events, we also received a refusal, and the action of the two trades had the effect of consolidating the local employers' organisations on the North-East Coast, as on March 12th we received a communication from the secretary of that body intimating that the Tyne, Wear, Tees, and Hartlepool Associations would work together as one body on all general questions. We asked a conference with this newly-formed body, but got no satisfaction, and on a ballot vote taken over the whole district it was decided by 290 to 20 votes that we persist in our application for an advance.

We quite realised the seriousness of the movement and the necessity of unity, and ten weeks before we met the employers we invited the co-operation of the A.S.E., and having met with no response, before we proceeded further the E.C. sent the General Secretary to interview the Executive of that body in London, when a promise was given that even if their

members were not brought out with ours they could not be allowed to finish work our members had left, nor to hamper us in any way. We gave a week's notice to cease work on April 7th, and that date 308 U.P.M.A., thirty-one A.S.E., and fifteen non-society men—a total of 354—came out on strike, leaving sixty patternmakers in the Tyne shops, forty of whom were A.S.E. members.

On the date we ceased work a telegram was received from the E.C. of the A.S.E. stating that their members would co-operate with ours, conditionally upon our giving a written undertaking that no settlement would take place without their sanction, and all men would return to work together. This was at once given, and we received a confirmatory communication and expressing such fervent sentiments of co-operation and goodwill that it put heart of grace into the most doubtful of our pessimists throughout the society. But one thing the undertaking of the A.S.E. did not do, and that was to shift their Tyne members from their entrenchments, and on the 30th April we received a bombshell in the shape of a further letter from the A.S.E. Headquarters to the effect that their Tyne patternmakers had unanimously decided not to leave work, but to preserve an attitude of strict neutrality, and in that course the Executive of their organisation had no alternative other than to acquiesce.

It would be tedious and unprofitable to deal further with our attempts to get our contemporaries into line. We tried to do so during the whole course of the dispute by meetings, deputations, floods of literature, but all to no purpose, and we were left to fight the battle as best we could, with the handicap of about one-sixth of the trade working the whole of the time our members—and some of theirs—were on the streets. There is no doubt but that the strike was well organised and every ounce of effort put into it. Wherever black work was traced our pickets were after it and generally had it stopped. We did not succeed in Huddersfield and Halifax, then hotbeds of non-unionism, but we certainly had some very interesting passages there and undoubtedly sowed the seeds of unionism in our trade in that district, of which we reaped the harvest in after years.

During the course of the strike continual efforts were being made by well-intentioned parties to obtain a settlement. In

particular, the Middlesbrough Trades Council convened several conferences of our trade and the moulders, and went so far as to recommend a general cessation of work to assist the two trades if a settlement satisfactory to both was not effected. As an expression of sympathy this proposal was encouraging; but it was nothing more, as a Trades Council does not possess plenary powers in regard to disputes.

The Mayor of Newcastle—and in these days the chief function of the Chief Magistrate of that unruly city appears to have been to act, or offer to act, as mediator in industrial disputes—offered his services, and the Bishop of Newcastle was accepted as a neutral chairman to consider the formation of a Conciliation Board, after the abandonment of their demand for an advance of wages. This proviso was fatal, but the negotiations between the belligerents henceforth were directed towards the establishment of a Conciliation Board, the withdrawal of the demand for an advance being a necessary preliminary. During these negotiations we receded somewhat into the background, as we wished to keep clear of any arrangement which abandoned the claim for an advance. Ultimately the moulders agreed to return to work at the old rate of wages; that a permanent Board of Conciliation be formed, whilst first business would be to consider the rate of moulders' wages in the district. This was accepted by 709 to 452 votes, and the first big strike of moulders finished up in the beginning of September.

We were rather pleased to see them out of the way, believing that our chance of success would be much more favourable if we had a clear and unhampered course. We certainly expected that the moulders' settlement was only nominal, and with no patternmakers to speak of at work the issue between ourselves and the employers would speedily be forced. It was not long before we were disillusioned on that point. A big store of patterns had been accumulated during the strike, and most of the moulders were afforded immediate employment, whilst the stream of castings which issued from the foundries soon had its influence upon other departments, and it was not long before we realised, as we have proved on every occasion upon which we have had a tilt at the employers on our own, that we cannot lay up a foundry, no matter how complete our organisation or how long we remain

on the streets, and what we considered was the real commencement of our dispute eventually proved the beginning of the end. It is easy enough to see these things in the perspective of years, but it is almost impossible to realise the true position whilst engaged in the hurly burly of an industrial conflict. That our rank and file members were confident of the ultimate result is indicated by a ballot vote the E.C. insisted on at the beginning of October, when by 256 to fifty-eight votes our North-East Coast members declined to submit their demand for an advance to a Conciliation Board.

This declaration of faith in our own cause was our last attempt to wring a concession from the employers. We held a conference, at which we were informed that several trades had intimated that if the patternmakers were granted an advance they would make immediate application for a similar concession. This was undoubtedly true, and our members realised at last that we were assuming a burden which should have been borne by the whole trade, and that we were not embarrassing the employers to any serious extent, and bowing to the inevitable, they intimated their willingness to resume work at the old rate of wages. An agreement was drawn up on 24th November, 1894, formally withdrawing our demand for an advance and containing other provisions regarding preference in starting old hands, non-interference with men already working or engaged, etc. The strike lasted thirty-three weeks and one day. One hundred and twenty of our members started immediately the settlement was effected, leaving about that number on the books, who were not absorbed for several months.

Judging from its direct result, this strike—the most protracted and important in our history—was an absolute failure. But by experience we gain much wisdom, and we learnt in the bitter school of experience the advantages of consolidation and the folly of venturing upon a dispute confined wholly to our own trade, the results of which were bound to apply to other sections of the engineering trade. This lesson served us in good stead for quite a long time, and the price we paid, although excessive, certainly gave us some return for the sacrifices entailed, not only to the society at large but to the individual members, many of whom felt the effects for more years than we care to remember.



JOHN MILLS.
Treasurer, Chairman, and Assistant General Secretary.

This record would be incomplete and ungenerous if mention were not made of the loyalty and devotion our members displayed throughout a long and wearisome struggle. Benefits were on a much lower scale than nowadays, and it was with difficulty that a continuous aliment of 15s. per week was paid. There was no wimpering or recrimination, and our members did not throw up the sponge until they realised that the continuance of the struggle was an unnecessary and wanton sacrifice both of their own and the societies' interests.

During the year we displayed considerable activity in regard to our long-standing complaint, that three firms in the London district, whose work was chiefly for the Admiralty, did not pay the district rate of wages to their patternmakers. Our local District Committee interested Mr. Sidney Buxton, M.P., in their complaint, with the result that one firm was requested to pay their patternmakers our rate of 40s. per week. Our efforts were supplemented by deputations from the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress and the London Trades Council to the Financial Secretary, who assured the deputation that so far as the firm written to was concerned the matter was satisfactorily settled. We informed that gentleman that he had been too sanguine, and the firm in question had ignored the intimation to pay our rate. A reply intimated that this was an Admiralty question and our communications had been handed to that Department, who informed us that after considerable investigation they had decided that the three firms of whom we complained were not comparable with the general body of London engineering firms and so could not be reasonably governed by their rates of wages.

This declaration was the means of our initiating a movement in the Press, by public meeting, and deputation, and by incessant correspondence to compel the Government to observe its own Fair Wages resolution. Our agitation ebbed and flowed for several years, and it ended by one firm granting the eight-hour-day and standard rates of wages, whilst the two others went out of business. It may be stated that throughout this lengthy and wearisome campaign we had the loyal assistance and countenance of the A.S.E.

Our other trade movements during this eventful year were few and unimportant. A rumour got abroad on the Clyde

that the joiners and shipwrights who were engaged in drawing a demarcation line between the two trades were allocating our work to each other on a system of barter, and as safety is the price of eternal vigilance, we at once got into touch with all parties concerned, including the employers, stating that it would be necessary to hear our views before any of our work was bartered away. Our claim was that whatever went into sand for the purpose of being moulded was patternmaking and must be done by patternmakers. In addition, we claimed a quantity of work which did not go into sand, but which had been hitherto done by millwrights, whose legitimate successors we claimed to be. As we heard no more about any allocation of our work and had no reason to complain, either our representations were sufficient or the whole affair was a mare's nest.

The largest firm in Greenock made an attempt to break the rate of 7½d. per hour by starting newcomers at 7¼d. We persuaded the firm to withdraw this threat, so far as our trade was concerned, although it was enforced against other sections of their workmen.

We had considerable trouble in Nottingham and Loughborough in maintaining our standard rates of 36s. and 34s. per week respectively, and adopted the only course open to us at the time of warning our members against starting at less than these rates.

An attempt to raise wages at Barrow resulted in an offer from the chief firm there to regulate rates by those paid on the North-East Coast, which offer was rejected. Ultimately we accepted a proposal to have our rates governed by those on the Clyde, a preference our Barrow members had abundant reason to regret afterwards.

At Belfast we sought to bury the hatchet still deeper by inviting the A.S.E. to co-operate with us in an application for an advance. They rather favoured the idea of a general application, but pledged themselves, if they did so, to demand 1s. extra on any advance to our trade. Our liabilities on the North-East Coast, however, put a stop to our proposals in either Belfast or anywhere else, although in Manchester we, in concert with other sections, made an attempt to abolish systematic overtime, whilst an attempt to introduce piece-work into our trade in Sheffield and Loughborough was

frustrated by the energetic action of our local branch in the first instance, and by the action of the firm, who discontinued the system after receiving a joint protest from our local secretary and the representative of the A.S.E. It is interesting to note that this system was introduced into Loughborough at the request of some of our members.

Our general position regarding wages did not materially change during the year, the average advanced by the trifling amount of $2\frac{1}{4}$ d. making the average rate over the whole of our branches £1 14s. $3\frac{1}{2}$ d. per week.

We established one new branch during the year, bringing our total number up to fifty-nine. Our total admissions numbered 398, of whom fourteen were Trade Protection members; and we excluded 131 members, which was a wonderful record considering the heavy contributions which were exacted on account of the strike on the North-East Coast. Our total membership reached 2,290. Our total income reached the high figure of £9,041, or £3 0s. $5\frac{3}{4}$ d. per member, which was much the largest contribution per member paid since the formation of our society, and which included levies amounting to 17s. 6d. per member imposed by the E.C. Expenditure was also a record, amounting, as it did, to £12,642, or £4 4s. $6\frac{3}{4}$ d. per member, our balance being thus reduced by £3,601, leaving us with a total balance of £6,119, or £2 0s. $11\frac{1}{4}$ d. per member. An interesting calculation which, however, cannot be regarded as being mathematically correct, places our expenditure on account of the North-East Coast at £6,500, or about £2 3s. per member. So whatever moral benefit we gained by the strike we certainly paid dearly for it.

1895.

The state of trade during the year was very unsatisfactory, especially so far as marine engineering was concerned. We had never fewer than 200 members out of work, our average over the whole year being 231, and 7.5 of our total membership were continuously unemployed. This stagnation made any serious attempt to improve workshop conditions quite impossible, and our efforts to effect such improvements were few and far between. As a matter of fact, it took us all our

time to maintain existing conditions without our embarking upon enterprises which were foredoomed to failure.

Several attempts were made to reduce wages at Barrow. The iron and steel works attempted an all-round reduction, but finally exempted patternmakers, fitters, turners, and blacksmiths. At Llanelly a notice of reduction was withdrawn, so far as we were concerned, but was persisted in against those trades whose lack of organisation made them fit subjects for such treatment. Bolton employers considered the time opportune to readjust the general conditions of employment in that town. By a process of masterly inactivity the joint trades succeeded in staving off a conference for several months. When a meeting was held ten questions fell to be decided, five from the employers and five from the workmen. They embraced such diverse matters at overtime, reductions of wages, advances to certain sections, forty-eight-hour week, out-fitters' loss of time getting to and from work, waste of time by workmen before and after meals and on Saturdays, loss of "quarters," spoiled work, piecework, and limitation of apprentices. Of all this number and variety of subjects, which were discussed at several conferences and a mass meeting, the net outcome was the acceptance of a limitation of overtime, contained in the following somewhat cryptic proposal: "That workmen who had made for four successive weeks more than ten hours per week, or forty hours' overtime in the aggregate, shall not be called upon to work for the ensuing two months more than ten hours' actual overtime in any one week." That certainly was one way of dealing with the evils of systematic overtime in Bolton a-quarter-of-a-century ago.

On the principle that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, Manchester resuscitated their anti-overtime movement, with the definite proposal that the North-East Coast arrangement should be applied, viz., no one to make more than eighteen hours' overtime in a month on new work, the time to be limited to sixty-five hours in any one week, or 230 in any four weeks." We hung on to this movement for some months, and then retired on the ground that our members did not wish to interfere with the existing arrangements.

We had a very peculiar experience at a firm in Nottingham who had been a source of trouble to the engineering trades in that town because of their reluctance to pay current rates. A list of fair shops was being drawn up by the local Trades Council, and it was decided to include this firm in the list, provided they paid 75 per cent. of their workmen Trade Union rates. This arrangement was accepted by the local organiser of the A.S.E. We objected very strongly to this proportion, and after some communications had passed between our Headquarters and the firm they conceded our point, so far as our trade was concerned, and agreed to pay our rate of 30s. per week.

Our Clyde branches, unable to obtain any general advance, took steps to obtain a general recognition of their minimum rate of 7½d. per hour, and by choosing the right firm at the right time succeeded in obtaining a general recognition of this rate without much trouble.

The most important aggressive movement we undertook during the year was on account of a demarcation difficulty we had with the joiners' society at the chief shipbuilding firm in Leith. The question at issue was the time-honoured one of ship patternmaking, and we certainly tried everything we knew with the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners to get them to the point. The now defunct Associated Society were quite willing to settle, but their bigger brothers held to their position, and, as a deputation to the firm proved abortive, our members in the engineering department came out on strike. The firm took up a quite reasonable attitude and urged us to come to some arrangement with the joiners, which we were only too anxious to do, and offered to return to work and allow the joiners to complete the work in dispute upon the vessel then under construction, provided that they undertook to make an amicable arrangement with us in regard to new work. They refused, however, to meet us in conference. Eventually we managed to get together, representatives of each Executive being present, and as the meeting was resultless we appealed to the Federation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades for a reference to arbitration, which was granted, the award being that either trade could do the work in dispute!

Other disputes with regard to joiners working at our trade took place at Nottingham and Govan and were settled by the withdrawal of the interlopers.

One of the very few attempts to introduce piecework into our trade was made at Bedford, where a firm migrated from London and insisted upon their patternmakers working on piece. A branch was established there chiefly to secure an organised resistance to this innovation. It is questionable if the Bedford Branch would have been opened at that time were it not for this circumstance. The strike lasted for about three months, and our members, none of whom were residents, evidently considered they had sacrificed enough for a principle and they left the firm to its own devices. It is interesting to note, however, that we abolished piecework in Bedford, and we almost abolished patternmaking as well, the firm giving most of their work out.

We had a very peculiar experience at Belfast, where the A.S.E. decided to apply for an advance of 2s. per week, a proposal that the sectional societies be invited to join being defeated by a large majority. Some of the sectional societies attempted to form a separate combination, to work concurrently, if perforce outside the A.S.E. The E.C. refused to allow our local branch to affiliate with this body on the ground that they would unofficially but faithfully take their marching orders from the A.S.E., an anticipation which was abundantly justified by subsequent events. The A.S.E. were refused an advance and came out on strike, their patternmakers and blacksmiths remaining at work, after vainly petitioning their District Committee for permission to stay in the shop if our members declined to come out. However, their respite was a brief one, as they were paid off, as were a number of our members, owing to the general suspension of work following the strike. This circumstance evidently affected the memories and upset the equilibrium of our members, who appointed a deputation to wait upon the District Committee of the A.S.E. to ascertain, what they knew perfectly well, "what the position was of the patternmakers of that society." Needless to say, our deputation was received with open arms, as brands plucked from the burning, and a written communication sent hoping that we would be now allowed to take our places as Trade Unionists in the struggle.

The soft sawder had the desired effect upon our local branch, who expressed their satisfaction with the report of their delegates, and asked permission to at once demand an advance of 2s. per week, which the E.C. refused to give and reaffirmed their position of neutrality. It may be noted that the Belfast strike spread to the Clyde, where our members were unaffected, and it was not settled until the turn of the year.

A dispute at Birkenhead with respect to the making of templates for ship patternmaking ended without hostilities by this work being conceded to our trade throughout the Mersey district, and at Aberdeen we successfully resisted, after a short strike, the employment of millwrights as assistant patternmakers.

We hear a good deal nowadays about the responsibility of the Government to provide either work or maintenance, and this principle is now accepted as one of the planks of the Labour platform. It is by no means new, and whilst we do not claim to be the pioneers in this demand, so long ago as 1895 our Liverpool Branch submitted a resolution for presentation to the Norwich Trades Union Congress demanding a ballot of the whole of the Trade Unions as to whether the Government should provide remunerative work for the unemployed at Trade Union rates and conditions. Our Liverpool Branch, however, appeared to be far in advance of their fellows, as only one-sixth of our members voted, twenty-three branches taking no notice of the resolution, which was carried by 454 to 118 votes.

Our rules provided that the E.C. should be given authority to express their opinion as to whether a Council meeting be held on the demand of any branch, and for the first time the E.C. recommended that such a meeting be called. The vote, however, failed to obtain the requisite two-thirds majority. By a small majority our society approved the admission of societies representing unskilled labourers to the Federation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades.

Our material progress during the year was fairly satisfactory. This general conclusion does not, however, refer to wages, which did not alter during the year, and stood at £1 14s. 3½d. per week.

We opened one branch during the year, chiefly for the purposes of a strike at Bedford, and closed it when it failed

to fully achieve its purpose. Our total number of branches at the end of the year being sixty-one. Our total admission of members was exceedingly satisfactory and numbered 369, of whom twenty-nine were Trade Protection members. Our exclusions were unusually heavy, 146 members having left us for various reasons, leaving our membership at the end of the year 3,160. Our total income amounted to £8,865, or £2 16s. 1½d. per member, being nearly 4s. per member less than during the previous year. Our expenditure was £7,061, or £2 4s. 8½d. per member, being £2 per member less than during 1894. Our gain for the year amounted to the substantial sum of £1,803, giving a balance of £7,922, or £2 10s. 1½d. per member.

1896.

This year opened most auspiciously. The industrial position had cleared and no disputes of any importance existed to interfere with the full development of trade, which appeared likely to follow the four lean years which had characterised the engineering industry. The Government led the way with a full shipbuilding programme, the effect of which was immediately reflected in an increased demand for the services of those engaged in that industry, as well the trades ancillary thereto. Our own trade showed a remarkable improvement, our unemployed members dropping from 218 in December to eighty-nine in January, our average for the year being sixty-five, as compared with an average of 231 for 1895, the percentages being respectively 1.9 and 7.5.

The immediate consequence of these improved conditions was an almost general demand for increased wages and better workshop regulations. Our first area of operations was on the Clyde, where we applied for an advance of ½d. per hour. An offer from the employers of ¼d. advance from date of acceptance, no alteration to take place until June 11th, when any subsequent alteration was subject to one month's notice by either side, was submitted to a ballot vote and accepted by 207 to 154 votes. The date of this offer was March 4th. The chief value of this settlement was not the amount of the advance, but the fact of its application throughout the Clyde area, with the exception of one firm in Linthouse and another in Dumbarton, who granted 1s. 6d. per week advance.

We did much better in Edinburgh and Leith, where we got ½d. advance on April 4th and another on June 1st, to remain in force for three months.

At Barrow we had a continuation of the old controversy. We sent in an application for 2s. 6d. advance, and were told that we had an agreement that our wages should rise and fall with the Tyne. This was incorrect, and we finally accepted 1s. advance, with a promise that any increase on this sum on the Clyde or Tyne would be paid our members in Barrow.

At Dundee and Johnstone 2s. was granted in two instalments, a similar settlement being affected on the Mersey.

The North-East Coast has always been brimful in surprises, one of which attached to a joint movement initiated by the local District Committee of the A.S.E. for an advance of wages. Together with several other sectional societies, we accepted the invitation, and when the joint trades met to decide upon the preliminary steps they were met by an instruction from the Executive of that organisation that they must proceed with the movement by themselves. No explanation was given, the local A.S.E. being as much nonplussed as ourselves. However, we, in common with the other sections of the engineering trade, sent in an application for an advance of 3s. 6d., and at the ensuing conference, when each trade had a separate hearing, were offered 1s. advance the pay following 23rd March, and an additional 6d. the first pay in July; these terms to be binding for the remainder of the year. Some of the trades accepted these terms, but we objected and received a final offer of 1s. on the first full pay in April and 1s. additional the first full pay in September, no general alteration to take place until after six months had elapsed from the date of the last advance, and then only after the customary month's notice. Our members objected strongly to the delay in granting the second instalment, as also to the six months' truce, and after several conferences proposals were made for the institution of a Conciliation Board for the North-East Coast, and were sugar-coated by a promise that our objections would be favourably considered. The Moulders' Conciliation Board, which had been instituted as the result of their abortive strike two years previously, appeared to be working well, and on a ballot vote

our members decided by 146 to 55 votes to take part in similar venture. Before the Board was finally constituted our members received the second 1s. advance, due in September, and the first question submitted to that body was the ante-dating of that advance to July. This was agreed to, and the Board was inaugurated by a payment of 9s. arrears to each of our members employed in associated shops.

This was the only Conciliation Board we ever formed with the employers. Undoubtedly they expected and intended that the North-East Coast Board should be the forerunner of similar institutions in other districts elsewhere, if not of a National Conciliation Board, which should cover the whole kingdom. They never actually made such a proposal or, in fact, suggested its extension beyond the area in which it was instituted, but those responsible for its formation certainly never intended it to have the limited application it eventually had. There is no doubt but that our members at large never looked kindly upon this Board, and even in the district our local members were so suspicious that a yearly vote was taken as to its continuance, when it was continued by sometimes very small majorities. There is no doubt, however, that it ultimately outlived any usefulness it ever may have possessed, as its decisions invariably followed national settlements, and it was a matter of no surprise that last year—1920—it was decided to withdraw from the Board, which, after an existence of twenty-four years, is now rapidly becoming a dim tradition of the past.

Our members at Hull participated in a general application for an advance, and received 1s. the first pay in April and an additional 1s. the first pay in August, whilst at Kilmarnock we had to be content with 1s., except in the case of some young journeymen who received double that sum. We were even less fortunate at Keighley, when, in response to a general application for 2s. increase, one-half of the workmen were successful, while the other half were refused any advance whatever, and were withdrawn. Our members were soon absorbed by other firms, and the strike, which was ultimately confined to one large firm, gradually petered out.

One of the few important centres where no differential rate of wages was recognised between our trade and other sections of engineering was Wigan. We succeeded in getting the

A.S.E. and Steam Engine Makers into line, and after what was described as a "friendly discussion," managed to obtain an advance of 2s. per week.

Our Clyde members do not appear to have been satisfied with the $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per hour advance they received at the beginning of the year, and they instituted a levelling-up movement by asking for $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per hour advance to all paid under 8d. and $\frac{1}{4}$ d. to those paid at that figure and over. An offer was made of an all-round $\frac{1}{4}$ d., with a six months' no-change arrangement, after which either side could give one month's notice of a change. This offer was accepted by 194 to 90 votes, and the non-associated shops were induced to follow suit without much difficulty. At this time it was claimed that it would be exceedingly difficult to find a non-society man in any marine shop in the district.

A movement in Leeds for a 2s. advance was only partially successful. We obtained the co-operation of the A.S.E. and the advance was paid by several firms. The larger employers restricted their offer to 1s., and notices had to be handed in before they came into line. The lack of association amongst the employers is indicated by the fact that two important firms conceded the advance after a few hours' strike, whilst the remainder took some days to make up their minds to the inevitable.

A movement for a wages advance in the London district was faced with the almost inevitable dissension which characterised our activities at that time. Our members wished to raise the minimum for the London district to £2 2s. per week, and we invited the co-operation of the A.S.E. and S.E.M. to that end. The latter organisation at once agreed to assist us, but the A.S.E. intimated that they were taking a ballot vote of their London members on the wages and hours question and asked us to agree to abide by the result of that vote. The introduction of the hours into a purely wages question raised an entirely new issue, which was not acceptable to our society, and we refused to co-operate, and endeavoured to obtain the assistance of all denominations of our trade in carrying into effect our original plan of establishing a minimum rate. In this we were successful. The A.S.E. took their ballot vote upon five questions dealing with hours and wages, but the response was so meagre that they

narrowed the issue down to two points, with no better result. So they dropped their general programme and gave their patternmakers permission to co-operate in our movement, which was speedily brought to a fairly successful issue. A slight difficulty arose owing to our asking for a minimum rate of £2 2s., or, where wages were paid by the hour, 9½d. per hour. This meant a difference of 9d. per week, and we cannot blame employers who preferred to pay the stated minimum. Some friction, however, was caused by two amounts being asked for, but ultimately the 9½d. was generally paid, although it was not until 1914 that a universal minimum rate was paid our trade in the London district. A few firms resisted any advance in 1896, seven U.P.M.A., six S.E.M., and twenty A.S.E. being concerned; but in due course these members were absorbed by other firms, and ultimately the dissenting firms either came into line or went out of business.

A successful attempt was made to assimilate the rate of wages in Birmingham and Smethwick, the rate in the latter town being 2s. less than in Birmingham. There never would have been the least difficulty in fixing a uniform rate for what, industrially, is one town had it not been that the chief firm in Smethwick had a system of bonus payment which considerably augmented the earnings of our members and, as is invariably the case, made them indifferent to minimum rates. A slight hitch took place when we obtained the co-operation of the A.S.E. regarding the area of our operations. We wished it fixed within a five-mile radius of Birmingham Town Hall. 'Theirs covered a much wider field and included a large slice of the Black Country. Ultimately we accepted their boundary, and after some difficulty with the Smethwick firm already referred to, where several of our members had to come out on strike for a few days, we fixed a minimum of 38s. per week, modified, however, in respect of some of the Black Country shops, to an advance of 2s. per week.

An interesting movement in Belfast for an advance of 2s. per week was quite successful. The A.S.E. had settled for 1s., but as our rate was only that amount above the fitters and turners' rates we persisted in our demand for the establishment of a 2s. differential, which was granted in two instalments. A special feature of the settlement was our

insistance that the A.S.E. patternmakers should share in this concession.

Other advance movements took place generally in association with the engineering trade in Lancashire and various districts in Yorkshire, and resulted in advances of 2s. per week being granted. At Oldham, however, where we conducted a separate campaign, we were not so successful, and twenty-seven U.P.M.A., nineteen A.S.E., two S.E.M., and six non-society men came out on strike, whilst fifteen members of our trade received the 2s. demanded. After eight weeks this advance was conceded, the largest firm in the district standing out. Derby had an unhappy experience. They managed to secure the co-operation to a movement confined to our trade of our contemporary societies, but after some week's procrastination decided to go on by themselves. Eighteen of our members came out on strike for a 2s. advance, and soon obtained employment in the district at the 34s. rate we were seeking to establish. We had a strike at Kilmarnock, our modest application being for an advance of 1s. per week. Two firms granted this sum, but the largest firm in the district, with another small establishment, refused, and twenty-eight of our members lifted their tools, leaving almost the same number of non-society men in the shops. The wonder is that under the circumstances we succeeded after a four weeks' strike.

We had a fair crop of disputes during the year, which did not refer to either wages or hours. At Blackburn a youth who had been successfully objected to by the fitters was sent into the patternshop and was reluctantly allowed to remain there for nine months, when our members objected so strongly to his presence that they struck work for a fortnight before he was removed. Truly, we are altruists to a man, but, as is usually the case, the application of our altruism is confined to other people than ourselves. A much more reputable attempt to promote our interests in this district was our participation in a joint movement in Haslingden to secure each day standing for itself in reckoning overtime and the definition of certain days to be regarded as holiday times. We had also the eternal squabble with regard to joiners, this time at Govan, where a joiner—old at our trade—had been allowed to make patterns for hinges. As might be expected, he had little to do, but when a rush took place

three of his fellow tradesmen were put on to help him. This aroused the resentment of our members, who expostulated with the firm, whose difficulties were certainly not lessened by a threat from the joiners to strike if their members were interfered with. Calmer counsels, however, ultimately prevailed, and our members were satisfied with the assurance that when the "hinge" expert could not overtake his work he would be assisted by our members.

At Birmingham we had it the other way round, a firm giving the cleading of cylinders done by our trade for a quarter of a century to handy men. The same firm also placed a labourer in charge of the patternshop machinery. This latter complaint was at once remedied, as was the former, these successes encouraging us to tackle a much more legitimate grievance at a neighbouring firm, where labourers did the sandpapering and varnishing of patterns. It was alleged that our members were responsible for this practice, many of them objecting to waste their time doing work which could be done equally well by an unskilled man. However, we succeeded in our quest, and as a generous concession allowed an old man of 70, to whom objection had been taken by our members in another firm, to continue his occupation of sorting screws.

A more legitimate grievance was the undue proportion of apprentices at the largest shop in the Smethwick district, there being twenty-four youths to thirty-one men. It was agreed that no more lads be started until the proportion had been reduced to two apprentices to five journeymen. A somewhat similar grievance was dealt with at Sheffield, where a joint deputation was appointed to deal with the excessive number of lads in our trade. One firm at once undertook to observe in the future a proportion of three men to one apprentice. At the largest firm in the district explanations were made as to their excessive proportion, which apparently satisfied the deputation. But at the third firm, where there were five lads to three men, a strike took place, which terminated when the firm undertook to reduce the number of their apprentices.

A movement to obtain a fifty-three-hour week in Sheffield was abandoned at this time owing to the lukewarmness of the A.S.E. At Bury we withdrew two of our members because a small firm employed a joiner at patternmaking.

At Liverpool a general movement to establish the fifty-three-hour week for the Mersey district was successful. It was also agreed that double time be paid for Bank Holidays, both concessions dating from the beginning of 1897.

At Belfast a joint movement was launched to deal with the question of overtime and reduction of hours, and at the same time the Federation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades embarked on what proved one of the most protracted movements on record, viz., the establishment of the weekly pay system on the Clyde. They also invited the various societies to express their opinion upon the propriety of going in for a reduction in the hours of labour. The apprentice question appeared to have been an acute grievance at Belfast at this time, where at one firm there were seventeen apprentices to the same number of journeymen. An attempt was made to correct this disparity, and a satisfactory assurance was given by the firm in question.

It may be noted that at the end of the year our North-East Coast District Committee tested the newly formed Conciliation Board by preferring a claim for an advance of 2s. 6d. per week, when 1s. was offered and accepted.

An interesting consolidation of the employers' organisations took place in June of this year, intimation being received that the North-West Engineering Trades Employers' Association, the North-East Coast Engineering Trades Employers' Association, the Belfast Employers' Association, and the Barrow Employers' Association had coalesced, and that any future communications received from the "Employers' Federation of Engineering Associations" would be on behalf of all these associations. This communication expressed the desire of the Federation to promote and strengthen harmonious relations between employers and employed.

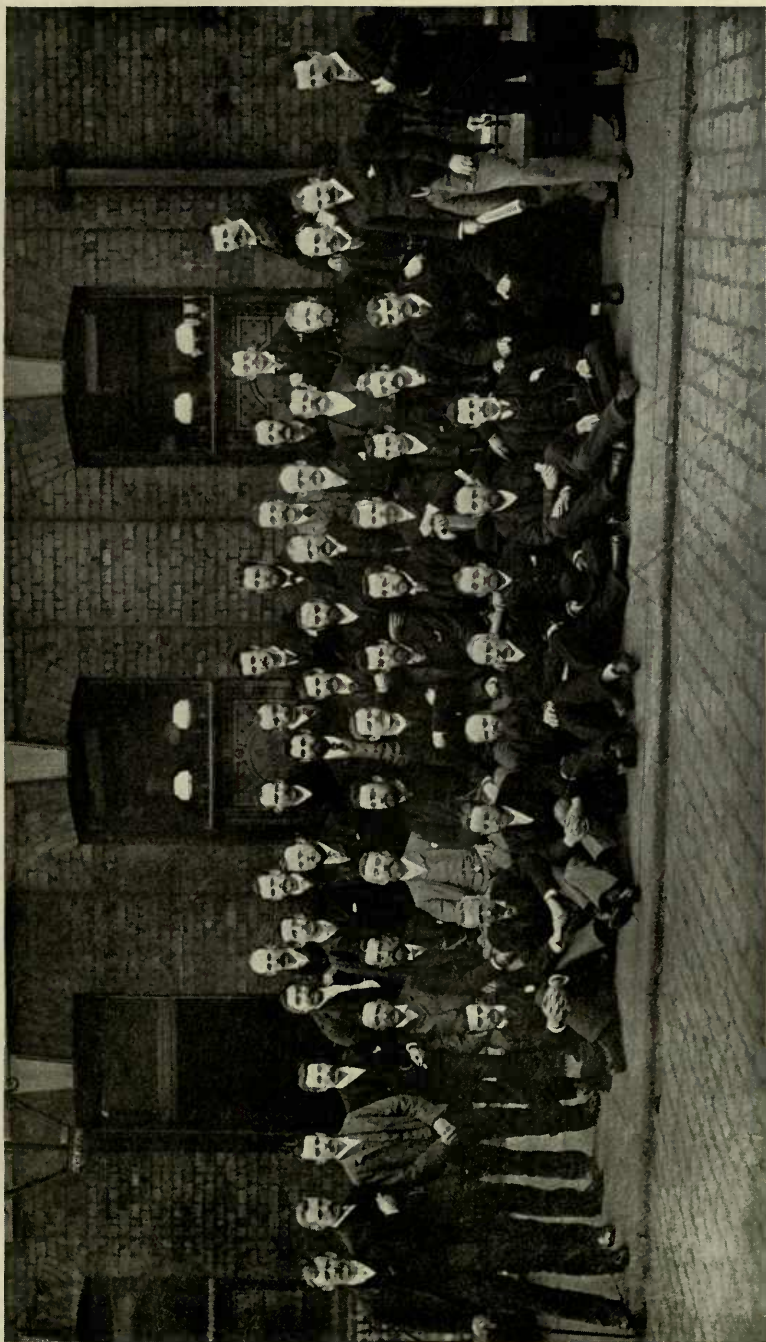
This year was by far the most successful in our history, so far as real advancement in regard to wages was concerned. The times were favourable and opportunities were equally sought and taken fullest advantage of, and only upon three occasions had we to take extreme steps, although isolated withdrawals were common, while, most important of all, the majority of our movements were undertaken by and on behalf of our own trade, generally with the loyal co-operation of our contemporaries. Fifty-one branches out of sixty-two

succeeded in raising their rates of wages, the average of which increased by 1s. 8½d. per week from £1 14s. 3½d. to £1 16s., this average rate, it is needless to say, being the highest recorded in our trade up to that period.

Whilst the year 1896 was by far our busiest year, so far as improvements in our working conditions were concerned, that circumstance did not prevent our paying due regard to our administrative responsibilities, the most important of which was the holding of a Council meeting on August 28th and 29th, the first since 1884, although since that year and up to the 1892 alteration of rules a vote had been taken every December as to the propriety of holding such a meeting the following June. The current rules did not make provision for a periodic vote, but gave any branch the right to demand a vote, and on a resolution from Woolwich the necessary two-thirds majority was obtained and an invitation given to the branches to send in any appeals against the decisions of the E.C. or business of any kind for the consideration of our supreme administrative body.

The business dealt with was classified under the following headings: (1) Precedents and interpretations of rules submitted by the E.C.; (2) proposed alterations of rules; and (3) protests against the decisions of the E.C. As a general rule the Council endorsed all precedents established by the E.C., the two or three exceptions being, to make it easier for unemployed members to draw benefit. Several proposed amendments to the rules were sent in by the branches, every one of which was repelled, whilst the appeals against the decisions of the E.C. were, with one trifling exception, dismissed. The meeting, which lasted two days, and was attended by seven Councilmen, together with the E.C. President, and General Secretary, cost £22 7s. 8d.

As a result of the meeting four proposals to alter the rules were voted on at the ensuing yearly meetings, all being carried by over two-thirds majorities. The total of £19 2s. specified in the Trade Benefit rule, was deleted as being out of harmony with the rule as interpreted by the Council. The privilege accorded to members joining from other societies paying double superannuation contribution was cancelled. It was decided that levies to Contingent Fund should be chargeable



EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, MANCHESTER, JUNE, 1892.

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only to free members who were working, and not as heretofore to all free members. Whilst the salaries of assistant secretary and money steward in branches over 200 members were doubled—3d. to 6d. per meeting night. Another alteration had been previously effected by the abolition of the proviso that no branch be opened within six miles of an existing branch.

An International Congress was held in London in July, at which we were represented by the General Secretary. It may have had its uses, but they were not apparent at the time. The proceedings savoured too much of a bear garden, and that meeting has not been duplicated in this country up to the present time.

During the year we reinvested our £1,000 in the Clyde Trust Perpetual Funded Debt. We were informed by our solicitors that these certificates were readily saleable on the Glasgow Stock Exchange.

A Fair Wages Committee was appointed by the House of Commons to inquire into the working of their Fair Wages resolution, and we were invited to supply evidence regarding the charges we had made against the Admiralty in respect of their contracts to three London marine engineering firms, who did not pay our rates. This we did, and in due course appeared before the Committee and gave evidence in support of our complaints, without, however, succeeding in convincing that body that we had a genuine grievance. The adoption of an eight-hour day by one firm and the demise of the other two, however, settled this long-standing question for good and all.

The adoption of a scheme of augmented Sick and Funeral Benefit was proposed towards the end of the year by two members of the Erith Branch, who took the trouble and incurred the expense of placing their views before the society by circular. The E.C. were quite friendly to the principle of these proposals, and invited the branches to express themselves in regard thereto. The Central proposal was to double our Sick Benefits for a contribution of 4d. per week. The response was not so general or favourable as might have been expected, but the majority of the expressed opinions were favourable enough for the E.C. to invite names of members who were willing to join the new scheme, and at the end

of the following March 961 names were handed in, only eight branches standing out altogether.

As our members had decided, after the third time of asking, to remove the seat of government from Manchester to London, the new E.C. were entrusted with responsibility of framing a code of rules for what was then and is now known as the "Auxiliary Sick and Funeral Fund."

Perhaps the last action of the Manchester E.C. was to definitely put in hand the designing and issue of an emblem. The rough outline was furnished by an eminent artist, Mr. Walter Crane, whilst one of our Woolwich members with exceptional artistic gifts completed the actual design.

We added three branches to our total during the year, bringing our numbers up to sixty-three, one—Bedford—being closed. Our total admission of members easily beat all records, 637 new entrants being recorded, fifty-one being Trade Protection members. Exclusions numbered 135, and our gain for the year numbered 476, giving us a total membership of 3,636. Our total income reached five figures for the first time, a distinction which has characterised it ever since, and amounted to £10,007, or £2 15s. 0½d. per member. Expenditure was the lowest aggregate for five years, totalling £4,945, or £1 7s. 2½d. per member, the lowest for eight years. Our gain amounted to £5,061, giving a total balance at the end of the year of £12,984, or £3 11s. 5d. per member.

The year 1896 certainly stands out as one of the most successful in our history. Our progress in membership, funds, and in the substantial improvement in the conditions applying to our craft was everything that the most ardent could wish for at that time, and under the circumstances which then applied to the engineering industry.

1897.

The general condition of trade at the beginning of the year was exceedingly good. For the first six months we had practically no members on the books, our average for that period being forty, and as a result we continued the efforts which had been carried on throughout the previous year to improve our conditions of employment as long as opportunity

offered. An abrupt termination to our activities in this direction took place when the engineers' strike and lock-out occurred in July of that year, which will be referred to in its proper sequence.

By a narrow majority the seat of government had been transferred from Manchester to London, and in making this transfer the society builded much better than it knew. It is very probable that had the Executive been anywhere else than in the centre of conflict we would have been involved in the struggle and been subjected not only to the material sacrifices which were borne by the belligerent unions but to the terms of settlement to which they were ultimately subjected.

Our different movements were as industrially and geographically varied as the most exacting could wish for. An excellent start was made by our Aberdeen Branch, who succeeded in obtaining the concession of a 31s. minimum to all competent members of our trade within twelve months of the completion of their apprenticeship. At the same time two of our members were withdrawn from a small firm in consequence of a nondescript woodworker being introduced to our trade. A few weeks afterwards we applied for an advance of 1d. per hour and were met by a point blank refusal. We modified our demands one half, and the employers informed us if we would again halve them they might give our modified application their favourable consideration. This our members refused to do and came out on strike, several non-society men joining us, and ultimately 1s. 6d. per week was conceded, and the strike terminated at the end of June.

At Ashton-under-Lyne we participated in a general movement, which resulted in an advance of 2s. per week being granted. A fourteen days' strike took place at one firm before the movement was completed. Our rate was then 38s. for fifty-three hours.

An unusual conference was held between our society and the North-East Coast shipbuilding employers, when it was arranged that the 1s. granted by the local Conciliation Board should apply to our members employed in shipyards. We subsequently made an arrangement whereby the wages of our shipyard members should be governed by Conciliation Board

settlements. A few weeks afterwards we made formal application to that body for an advance of 1s. per week, but finally accepted half that amount, making the rate 37s. per week. This is probably the smallest general advance ever offered to and accepted by our society. At Darlington we received an advance of 1s. per week, except at the largest firm in that town, where 1s. 6d. was obtained. Dundee and Edinburgh and Leith obtained an advance of 1d. per hour, and at Hull 2s. was granted in two equal instalments, with a four months' interval.

At Earleston a joint committee of the engineering trades, brought into existence to obtain an advance of wages, decided to drop that movement and concentrate on a fifty-three-hour week. In this they were successful, but our members decided to have a supplementary effort to increase their wage rate, and obtained a 2s. advance in two instalments, separated by a three months' interval.

Barrow succeeded in obtaining an advance of 1s. per week, and at Sowerby Bridge our members received 2s. in the usual two instalments, whilst we participated in joint movements at Bolton, Leicester, and Sheffield, the latter succeeding in raising patternmakers' wages to 38s. per week. At Donnington a joint movement succeeded in obtaining 2s. in two instalments, and at Coventry a joint movement was instituted to obtain an advance to all patternmakers receiving less than 38s. for fifty-four hours, whilst on the Clyde our local District Committee were busily engaged in making their last advance operative amongst the non-associated firms in the district, and particularly in the northern district of the city, where the light casting firms are situated.

These and previous movements have been detailed in order that our members can the better judge as to whether their material interests were more efficiently promoted in an organisation devoted entirely to the betterment of our particular trade or whether we would have fared equally well—or better—in a mixed Trade Union in which we were, and always will be, in an insignificant minority.

It must be remembered that in June, 1897, we were at the beginning of a new era in industrial relationships, although

we were quite unconscious of that fact. Hitherto, the employers' associations were somewhat loose concerns, with but little homogeneity, and although federations had been formed, their object seemed to have been more to disseminate information than to obtain uniformity; local autonomy being insisted upon just as firmly amongst the employers as amongst the workmen. The result was, that during the year 1896 and the first half of 1897 we took every advantage of a favourable condition of trade and pressed for enhanced wages and improved workshop conditions, and, as is seen from the preceding pages, we were fairly successful, judging, of course, from the standard of a quarter of a century ago, and the variable settlements we effected prove conclusively that the employers had no fixed policy in regard to either wages or general workshop conditions, and even in districts which, both geographically and industrially, were essentially self-contained considerable latitude was either assumed or practised by employers, even when they were affiliated with their local association.

There is not the least doubt but that at that time we profited by this laxity because of our comparative insularity. We were, as we are now, a small, compact, well organised, and easily manœuvred body. Our financial position was, from a Trade Union standpoint, exceedingly good, and knowing to the full the value of these advantages we pushed them to the limit, generally with conspicuous success. When, however, we associated with other trades our special interests undoubtedly suffered, whilst we acting by ourselves invariably had a clear cut issue in view, which, in the vast majority of cases, meant increases of wages, and a long way after, the protection of our trade from the intrusion of outsiders. We found that when we participated with the general body of the engineering trade, even in a wages movement, a number of side issues were introduced which did not greatly concern us, but which obscured the main issue to such an extent that what interested us mostly was almost lost sight of by a consideration of other questions which, important as they might have been to the general body, had only a secondary interest to us. So included in these ancilliary questions was that of hours, which never greatly interested our society for the simple

reason that they knew that they would participate in any general readjustment of hours in the engineering trade whether they directly concerned themselves in bringing about a change or not. This may not be a very lofty sentiment to express, but it is undoubtedly the fact that we at that time concentrated upon one point—wages—and that for the causes already explained were much more successful when we, like "Hal o' the Wynd," fought for our own hand than when we associated with the general body of the engineering trade. That time, however, has passed and gone, and the events which succeeded the period to which we have been referring changed the whole future and policy of the various unions connected with the engineering trade. Before dealing with the events we have foreshadowed a passing reference may be made to movements other than those referring to wages, which occurred during the first six months of 1897.

On the Mersey the joint committee succeeded, after considerable trouble, in rounding up several small firms who objected to grant the fifty-three-hour week.

The apprentice question cropped up at Wigan and Donnington. The chief firm in Wigan had seven apprentices to twelve journeymen, and after a friendly conference with the principal it was agreed that in due course the proportion should be maintained at two to five. At Donnington the ratio was much worse, there being seven apprentices to five men. At Bolton a joint committee was formed to deal with the same question, but it did not appear to have "functioned."

A joint committee, instituted with much difficulty, undertook to make the fifty-three hours operative in Leeds, and as an afterthought an attempt was made to restrict overtime. The programme of operations having been agreed to, a setback was experienced when the Executive of the A.S.E. refused to go on if the unskilled trades were allowed representation on the committee. They accordingly withdrew, and a limit on overtime was fixed of ten hours in one week, or twenty-four hours in any four weeks. At a conference with the local employers' association the fifty-three hours was conceded without reduction of wages, and certain restrictions were agreed to with regard to overtime, thirty-two hours being fixed as the maximum, to be worked in four successive weeks.

In Glasgow we made a clean sweep of the non-society element, in a shop in the northern part of the city, although our members had to lift their tools before they accomplished this end. At Blackburn we participated in a general turnout from one firm, who demanded a week's notice from their workmen, but reserved the right of instant dismissal. The matter was settled by making six days' notice applicable to both sides.

At Belfast the monotony of applications for increased remuneration was varied by a demand for the redress of certain grievances of which the workmen employed by the Harbour Commissioners complained. One was as curious as it was unique. When being paid men had to shout out their name, number, and wages due. If a man shouted out too little the difference was deducted, and if too much he was fined. A deputation to the manager had a sympathetic reception, and an investigation was promised.

During the month of February a joint committee of the engineering trade was formed in London to promote an eight-hour day, which the Manchester E.C. decided to support. At the same time they resolved to identify themselves with a movement promoted by the Clyde District Committee of the Federation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades to assimilate the winter and summer hours in Clyde shipyards, and it may be stated that nothing more was heard of the latter attempt.

With regard to the London movement, sanction of the E.C. only amounted to an instruction to the local District Committee to appoint two of their number to attend the meetings of the joint committee with a watching brief, there being no time to consult the London members, and the seat of government being in process of transfer from Manchester to London. Our District Committee asked our local branches to express their opinion as to our permanent identification with the movement, and received an almost unanimous declaration that the time was inopportune, and our delegates were at once withdrawn from the joint committee, and that fact was duly chronicled in the March Monthly Report.

It is as well to note that the eight-hour movement was initiated toward the end of 1896, when we, being of opinion

that wages were more important than hours at the time, conducted a successful campaign in the London district to raise our rates. Further, the hours question had been before the Federation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades for about a year previous to the initiation of the London movement. The opinions of the various affiliated societies were taken and preparation made for a vote to be taken upon proposals to reduce the hours of labour to fifty-one, forty-eight, or forty-five hours per week, the intention being to make the movement a national one, and as soon as the views of the federated societies had been ascertained to invite the co-operation of the whole of the societies connected with the engineering and shipbuilding industry.

This scheme, however, was rendered abortive by the action of the London Eight Hours Joint Committee, who, after several unsuccessful attempts to obtain a fully representative vote, circularised some 800 firms in the Metropolitan area demanding the eight-hour day. Some 176 firms complied with the terms of the circular, but the federated firms, which included most of the more important establishments, refused to make any concession, and they were stiffened in this attitude owing to the circumstance that they federated with the National Employers' Federation when they saw a strike was pending toward the end of June.

The areas governed by the Employers' Federation of Engineering Associations under their reconstituted organisation were: Manchester, London, Bolton, in addition to the North-East Coast, North-West Belfast, and Barrow Districts.

The consolidation of the employers' forces was perfectly well known to those responsible for the conduct of the shorter hours movement in the London district, and whilst the existence of this formidable combination may have influenced their tactics, it certainly did not prevent them from persevering with their demands. They decided to try to split the Employers' Association, and selected five firms, from which they withdrew the workmen represented on the joint committee. This strategy was extremely crude and never had an earthly chance of success, and their action was immediately followed by a lock-out by the London federated employers

of 25 per cent. of their workmen, their provincial contemporaries immediately afterwards following suit. The workmen's organisations obligingly countered by withdrawing the remaining 75 per cent. of their members, thereby saving the employers the trouble of trying to discriminate between combatants and non-combatants; our society belonging to the latter category were not interfered with, although the A.S.E. patternmakers were made the victims of both the strike and resultant lock-out, very much to the disgust of many of them.

It cannot be too strongly emphasised and reiterated, that the abstention of our London members from this movement was the result of their deliberate choice. At the invitation of the E.C. of the A.S.E. your E.C. requested our local District Committee to send two of their number to the joint committee with a watching brief. This was done, and our District Committee at once took the opinion of the local branches as to the propriety of prominently identifying ourselves with the eight-hours movement for London. The branches were unanimous that the time was inopportune, and the E.C. had no other alternative than to withdraw our delegates, which they did on April 2nd.

The movement appeared to be gathering force, and on May 22nd a mass meeting of our London members was called to consider the position. About sixty attended, and it was decided to take a ballot vote as to joining the movement. Only two branches returned a vote, which numbered forty-one out of a possible 260, and the actual returns were so contradictory and meagre that they were ignored by the E.C. "as being beneath contempt." As soon, however, as the lock-out became an accomplished fact many of our members were seized with panic and demanded that they should be allowed to come out wherever a lock-out was being enforced. This demand came chiefly from the London and Manchester districts, but, as the question had now become a national one, and any action we took would have implicated our members throughout the whole of the areas covered by the newly formed Employers' Federation, the E.C. refused to be rushed, and decided that the question of our association with the movement must be decided by the members at large, and in order that members who were unemployed, or likely to be unemployed owing to the lock-out, should have no inducement

to vote for joining the movement in order to draw Strike Benefit in addition to their ordinary Trade Donation, the E.C. asked for powers to raise funds in order to grant exactly the same benefit to members thrown out owing to the lock-out as if they were actual participants in the dispute. As events turned out this proved a wise and statesmanlike attitude and undoubtedly prevented our association from embarking in a dispute which would have absolutely ruined us in a financial sense and have compelled us to submit to the terms imposed on the engineers when the ultimate settlement took place.

The question submitted to the members was simply that of rejoining the London Joint Committee. The circular containing a resume of the position was approved on 16th July, and the vote, for which ballot papers were issued, was returnable on August 2nd. The time for consideration was short, but the position was extremely critical, and in the end 57 per cent. of our members voted—under the circumstances, an extraordinarily large proportion of our total membership. The result was even more remarkable, 1,100 being in favour, and 1,123 being against joining the London Eight Hours Joint Committee; so by the narrow majority of twenty-three our society decided to stand aloof from the movement.

The proposal to make an assistance grant of 5s. per week to all free members and 10s. per week to all non-free and Trade Protection members so long as the dispute lasted was carried by 1,745 to 322 votes.

We were not the only society who took the course of consulting the whole of the members on the question of voluntary identification with the London eight hours' movement. The Boilermakers' Society, on a ballot vote of their members, decided to follow our example by 25,433 to 3,043 votes, and the Friendly Society of Ironfounders followed suit, their votes being 3,983 for, and 6,800 against.

Our definite abstention from this dispute was followed by several proposals to render financial assistance to the societies involved, and a 3d. per week levy was carried by 1,176 to 277 votes. From this source we sent £30 per week to the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress. This payment continued from the beginning of October until

the end of the year. It is interesting to note that our sympathy with the victims of the lock-out was not only material but moral, as, for probably the first time in our history, our Glasgow members, to the number of 300, took part in a procession of engineers on the occasion of a local demonstration. All the same, a good deal of odium attached to our society in certain centres because of the stand we took upon this question, and at various Congresses our right to exercise our own judgment upon a matter which vitally affected our interests and policy was repeatedly challenged, invariably by those who did not know the real facts. These recriminations, however, placed us upon the defensive and afforded us the opportunity of explaining our position to our fellow Trade Unionists, with the result that this sniping soon died out, and there is no doubt that there was not a sectional society represented on the London Eight Hours Joint Committee but what would have been thankful had they been in a position to take the independent action taken by our organisation, and we were the only sectional society representing a trade within the organisation of the A.S.E. who were strong enough to take such a stand. Had it been otherwise and had we been involved either voluntarily or involuntarily we certainly would have been unable to meet our financial obligations and would have been compelled to solicit pecuniary assistance from the organisation responsible for the initiation and continuance of the movement. As it was, we were pretty hard hit. At one time we had 13 per cent. of our members out of work and a large proportion of the remainder working short time, and as a sum of 15s. per week was continued to all free members during the whole course of the dispute, our payments were in like proportion amounting, in addition to our ordinary contributions of 1s. per week, to 1s. per week for Assistance Levy and 3d. per week Emergency Levy. The Tool Levy of 1s. was also payable during the currency of these extra payments. It is also worthy of note that toward the end of the year we doubled our Emergency Levy and forwarded £60 per week to the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress.

Whilst we had no official connection with the London eight hours' movement—and its history can scarcely be considered appropriate to a record dealing wholly with our own society—

we can scarcely altogether ignore a movement which exercised a profound influence upon the position and prospects of our particular trade. The original cause of the dispute sank into insignificance within a few weeks of the commencement of hostilities. The employers made it quite clear that not only were they prepared to resist to the uttermost any reduction in the hours of labour, but before a resumption of work took place they would insist upon such an alteration in their relationships with the belligerent unions as would make a recurrence of the continual disputes which had hitherto characterised the engineering trade extremely difficult, if not impossible. To this end they submitted a code of rules known as the "Provisions for Avoiding Disputes" as a form of agreement, which must be accepted before a resumption of work could be entertained. These terms were submitted to a vote of the societies interested and were rejected, and the dispute dragged on until the beginning of the year, when, with depleted funds and it being apparent that continued resistance to the employers' proposals simply meant a wanton and futile extension of a condition of destitution such as had never been experienced by skilled engineers throughout their history, the inevitable surrender was made, the employers' terms, in a slightly amended form, agreed to, and the dispute, which commenced on July 3rd, 1897, was formally terminated on January 29th, 1898, having lasted exactly seven months, and from that date until 1918 no organised attempt was made to enforce a reduction in the hours of labour, although during that interval of twenty-one years the question was made the subject of continual and friendly discussion.

The chief result to our society of the settlement was, that we were the only national organisation representing an overtime or "the association would consider itself free to take such steps in the matter as may be deemed expedient." A special summoned meeting confirmed their previous decision by 244 to 174 votes, but the lock-out had been in operation volved trade who were not bound by the "Provisions for Avoiding Disputes," a position we have maintained to the present day; so we cannot tell by actual experience whether they would have benefited us or not. Certain it is that they have proved effective in preventing serious disputes in the engineering trade, and he would be a bold man who would

assert that their acceptance has made the signatories' unions the bond slaves of the Employers' Federations.

As may be surmised, these important happenings put a stop to any attempt on our part to improve our position. Movements on the Clyde and North-East Coast which had been initiated were postponed until a more favourable opportunity. In the former district the refusal of the employers to make any concession was followed by a refusal to work overtime, even in cases of emergency and urgency. The occasion arose at one firm, and in consequence of our refusal the Employers' Association demanded that we withdraw our resolution against some three months, we had 500 members on the books and the minority was a large one. The E.C. considered that our best interests lay in the direction of complying with the employers' demands, which we did with the best grace possible, fortified by the knowledge that it was extremely improbable that any demand to work overtime would be made during the continuance of the lock-out.

At Belfast, however, we managed to obtain an advance of 1s., to stand without alteration for twelve months. We being always ready for a scrap on the question of outsiders working at our trade, had opportunities for defending our position at Paisley, Gloucester, Middlesbrough, and Bury, and against the shipwrights at Chatham Dockyard.

During the year our Auxiliary Sick and Funeral Fund was fairly launched. Every facility was given the branches to express their views with regard to the rules which had been drawn up and approved by the E.C., but very few alterations were effected, and no higher tribute can be paid to those responsible for the rules than that, after twenty-four years' working, they are in every essential particular, and in most of their details, identical with the original code. They had a good send-off, coming into operation with the June quarter. During the first half-year 543 members joined and over £200 was raised in contributions, whilst only nine branches declined to participate in the scheme.

During the year we definitely settled on a design for our emblem, which was issued during the early part of 1898. We ordered 3,000 copies, and it was many weary years before we exhausted our supply.

The programme of wages movements which was cut short by the engineers' hours dispute did achieve something, our average being raised to the highest point known in our trade—£1 16s. 5d., an increase of 5d. over the figure of 1896. Our unemployed lists do not look so formidable when seen on the yearly average as they did during the lock-out months. Our average over the year was 212, and ranges from 505 in October to twenty-two in May; the percentage being 5.6, a by no means excessive proportion. No new branches were opened during the year, but our membership made substantial if not rapid progress. There were 441 new members admitted, which is exceedingly good, when it is remembered that during the latter half of the year our contributions were doubled. Exclusions numbered 145, our gain for the year being 272, leaving us with a total membership at the close of 1897 of 3,908.

Financially we did remarkably well during the year, the members backing the E.C. up in their policy of meeting our extra expenditure by levy. Our income amounted to £12,447, or £3 3s. 8½d. per member, being by far the largest aggregate and proportionate income in our history. Expenditure reached £9,716, or £2 9s. 8½d. per member, which was by no means a record, our gain for the year amounting to £2,730, leaving us with a total balance of £15,715, or £4 0s. 5d. per member. Our Trade Benefit cost £3,933, or two and a-half times the expenses under this heading of the year previous. The uniform benefit of 15s. per week to free and 10s. per week to non-free and Trade Protection members during the strike and lock-out was maintained by grants from the Assistance Fund, and was raised by levies, which realised £2,280. We disbursed £2,240 to our members and granted a small sum to other trades, the receipts and expenses about balancing.

In addition, during 1897 we raised by a 3s. levy £411 for granting assistance to the engineers, £360 of which was handed to the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress for this purpose. We doubled our levy and contribution in 1898, but as the dispute lasted only four weeks during that year the amount our members were called upon to pay amounted to 2s., and we sent £240, with an additional approximate balance in hand of £50, to the Parliamentary

Committee, and so extinguished this special Emergency Funds, and we can claim the credit of being the most generous contributors to the engineers' Lock-Out Fund in the Trade Union movement.

1898.

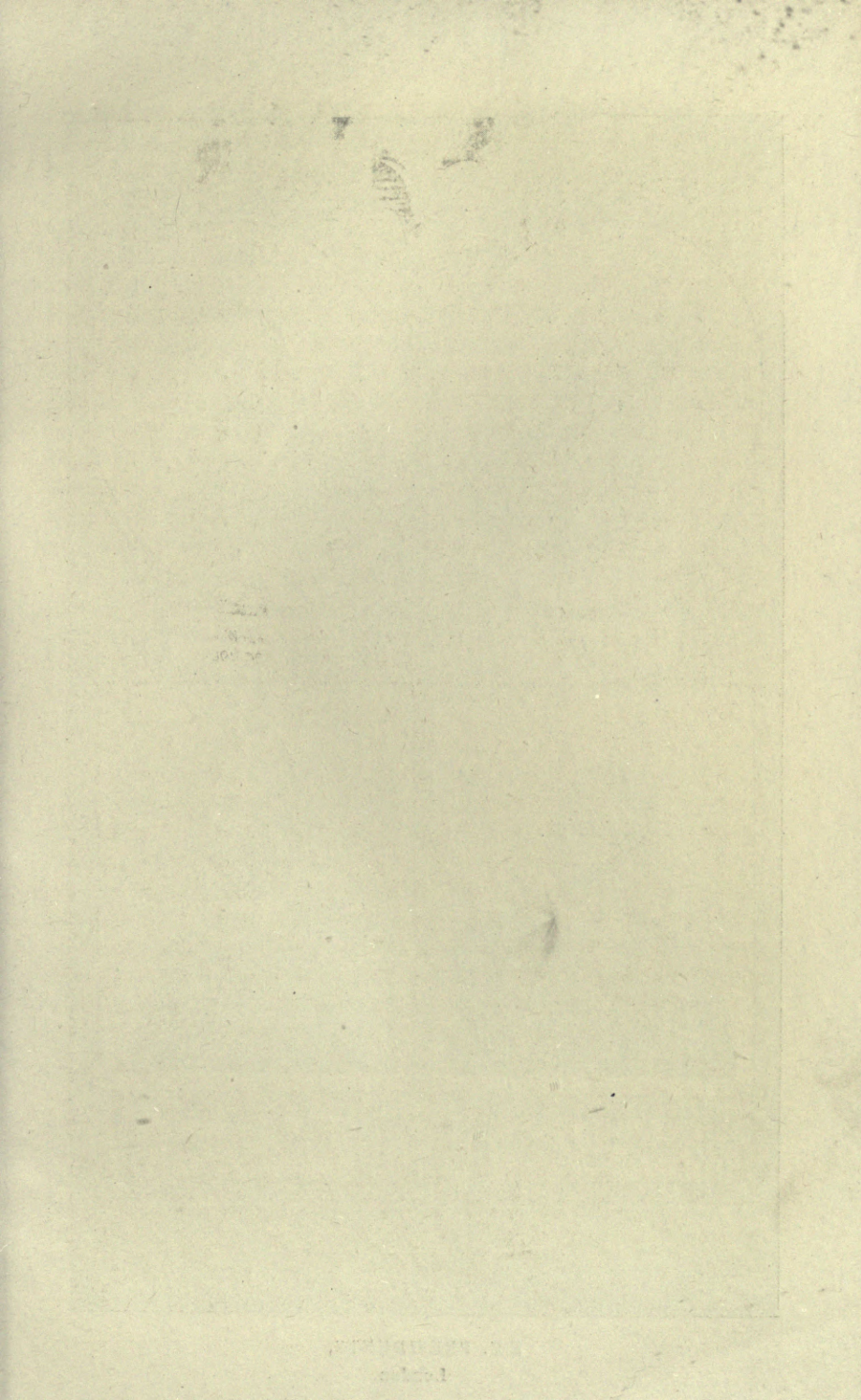
The numbing effect of the engineers' hours dispute was felt for some months after its termination in January, and although our vacant books showed an immediate improvement it took some time for our members to realise that they could resume at the point they had left off in June of the preceding year.

The North-East Coast led off with an application for a 2s. per week advance, one-half of that amount being eventually accepted. On the Clyde our interrupted movement for a $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per hour advance was resumed. As in the previous instance one-half of that sum was granted, the enhanced rate to remain undisturbed for six months, and thereafter further alterations to be subjected to one month's notice on either side. These terms were eventually agreed to. On the Mersey we applied for 3s. advance, and in order to encourage an immediate settlement stopped all overtime. We also invited the co-operation of the A.S.E. patternmakers, but before they could make up their minds we received an immediate 1s. and a further 6d. three months afterwards. At Barrow we asked for 1s. advance as an equivalent for working the fifty-four hours. The chief firm granted the advance, with the proviso that in future wages in that town should rise and fall with the Tyne or Clyde; but one month later, as some misunderstanding arose as to when the advance should come into operation, our members quite unnecessarily came out on strike. Ultimately a settlement was effected, according to which a nominal advance of 1s. was given and an arrangement made whereby wages should rise or fall with those on the Clyde but one month later, and that wages be calculated on an hourly basis, as on the Clyde, which meant an advance of 1s. 3d. per week. Edinburgh and Leith received the terms agreed to on the Clyde, whilst Dundee accepted the employers' offer of 1s. per week. At Sheepbridge our members obtained an advance of 2s. per week, and at Whitehaven 2s. 3d. was obtained, although in the neighbouring town of Workington the best terms we could obtain was an offer of 1s. 6d. advance.

At Birmingham, Wolverhampton, and Darlaston we had an example of sectional jealousy, which proved fatal to a most promising wages movement, the A.S.E. refusing to allow their patternmaker members to co-operate with us, and we refused to move without their assistance, and an opportunity to improve rates was allowed to slip. Leeds made a similar attempt to make a united demand, with the same result, and ultimately we accepted 1s. advance on behalf of the whole trade.

A joint committee was formed in Sheffield to demand an advance of 2s. per week, coupled with a fifty-three-hour week, and this appears to have been the first general movement under the "Provisions for Avoiding Disputes." The local conference followed the usual lines, but a strong disinclination was manifested by the local employers' association to effect a local settlement. Ultimately, however, an offer in writing was made of 1s. advance, but no concession was made in regard to hours; and the employers' offer was rejected by a mass meeting of the workmen concerned. The whole question was transferred to London for further consideration, and ultimately we were informed that the next conference would be limited to the E.C. of the A.S.E. and the Employers' Federation, at which the demand for a reduction of hours was withdrawn and an advance of 2s. recommended, this offer being eventually accepted by the A.S.E. and perforce concurred in by the other societies. We were mightily indignant at the cavalier treatment to which we had been subjected, but after all, we had little reason for complaint, as it was scarcely reasonable to expect that societies who were rigidly bound by an agreement with the employers could associate with organisations who were quite untrammelled by any permanent restrictions, but who could run with the hare or hunt with the hounds, as best suited their convenience and interests.

The mistake we made was in associating with trades whose free movement was restricted by their agreements with the employers, and as this association was quite voluntary on our part we had only ourselves to thank when we were cold-shouldered out of the conference-room. That it was quite unnecessary to seek association with other organisations representing our trade was evidenced in several instances about that time. For example, in Derby we sought vainly





*Ed. Appleby. London Nl.
1897-8.*



*J. M. Whittaker. Woolwich
1899-1900-1901-2.*



*Thos. Battison. Erith.
1900-1.*



*A. Mackenzie. Greenwich.
1902-3.*

**E.C. PRESIDENTS,
London.**

for the co-operation of the A.S.E. patternmakers, went in by ourselves, and got 2s. advance for the whole trade. That there was no uniformity of policy on the part of the A.S.E. is shown by their co-operation with us at Blackburn, where we applied for an advance of 2s. per week. This move unearthed an employers' association of whose existence we had hitherto been profoundly ignorant, viz., the "Mid-Lancashire Engineering Employers," who represented the whole of that area. No offer was made, and our members, with five A.S.E. and one S.E.M., came out on strike, under threat of a lock-out of all our members in Mid-Lancashire. Ultimately an offer of 1s. per week was accepted by our Blackburn Branch, and was applied to the whole of the area concerned, which is probably the first and only occasion upon which any large number of our trade have received an advance in wages without asking for it.

It is unnecessary to further detail the various movements for increased wages which we conducted during the year, and of which the foregoing may be regarded as typical. Advances were obtained in thirty-nine branches, an average of 7d. representing the proportionate amount of advance we received, our general average being raised to £1 17s. per week, and, with one or two exceptions, the whole of these wages movements owed their inception and conduct to our organisation, and were, with the exception of Barrow and Blackburn, carried to a successful issue without our having to resort to strikes.

Our industrial activities were not limited to wage movements. At Renfrew we found ourselves up against the introduction of bonus in one establishment, and withdrew all our members and succeeded in enforcing the withdrawal of the system, so far as our trade was concerned. We had trouble at Sunderland and Middlesbrough owing to an attempt of the local employers to apply the engineers' agreement—"Provisions for Avoiding Disputes"—to our trade. The trouble arose owing to overtime, our limit being eighteen hours per month; the engineers were limited to forty hours per month. The question of piecework also cropped up. We, however, had little difficulty in upholding our own regulations of the Conciliation Board. At Barnsley we withdrew our members against the employment of a joiner at our trade;

and we had similar experiences at firms in Liverpool and Kinghorn, whilst at the principal firm in Dumbarton we made a definite stand against a piecework system which had been in partial operation for some time. Rather curiously, we did not block the shop, and our members were free to work there, provided they did not work piecework, and in course of time several of our members did obtain employment at this firm, and were paid on time rates, whilst the older hands, some of whom had been joiners, worked on piece.

During the year we had the unique experience of the Woolwich Branch complaining of the employment of surfacing machines in patternshops. They asked the E.C. to carry their protest to H.M. Inspector of Factories, which, needless to say, the E.C. declined to do. A much more commendable action was to enter into an agreement with the A.S.E. and S.E.M. not to allow any patternmaker to enter the Arsenal at less than the district rate. Perhaps a still more important resolution from the same branch was in respect of our Superannuation Fund, which they proposed to put on a sounder basis by investing the proceeds of a special levy as the nucleus of a fund which would guarantee the payment of this benefit, however depleted our finances might become through the effects of a great industrial upheaval or other unforeseen circumstances. The Woolwich proposal excited considerable interest, and ultimately the society, by 669 to 402 votes, decided to pay a levy of 1s. per quarter for the first three quarters of the year, and which continued for twenty-one years, until the last revision of rules in 1919, when all levies were abolished!

The question of weekly pays on the Clyde occupied considerable attention during the year. This was a movement initiated and carried through by the Federation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades, who had much more difficulty getting the unions concerned into line than they had in dealing with the employers. The fact that the A.S.E. were outside the Federation proved a stumbling-block to the movement and tied it up for several months. The engineers' eight hours dispute also delayed any effective steps being taken to obtain this much-needed concession. After considerable negotiation a conference was granted by the Clyde employers, and the workmen's case fully stated, when, after further

negotiation, it was decided to try the weekly system of payment of wages for twelve months, at the expiration of which period either side could raise the question of its continuance. The movement took some two years to mature, and the new system commenced its trial period in April, 1899.

The general condition of trade throughout the year was good. The average number of unemployed members was sixty-one, as compared with 212 for 1897, and our percentage for 1898 was 1.5 less than we had shown for nine years previously, and our figures for the year under review were increased owing to the circumstance that we had 309 members on the books during January, when the engineers' lock-out terminated. We added four to the number of our branches during the year, which gave us a total of sixty-seven at the end of the year. Our membership continued its steady advance, 527 recruits being recorded during the year, twenty-two of whom were Trade Protection members. Exclusions were unusually numerous and numbered 179, these deflections being chiefly due to the heavy payments exacted during the engineers' hours dispute. Our gain in membership was quite satisfactory, numbering 300, giving us a total numerical strength at the end of the year of 4,208.

Our financial records for the year were exceedingly good. Income totalled £12,206, or £2 18s. per member, being £240 in the aggregate and 5s. 8½d. per member less than the figures of the previous year. Expenditure amounted to £7,269, or £1 14s. 6½d. per member, being £2,447 less than our expenses for the preceding twelve months, the difference per member being no less than 15s. 2d. Our gain for the year amounted to £4,936, which, added to our balance brought forward, gave us a total balance of £20,652, or £4 18s. 1½d. per member. Our expenditure to Trade Fund was less by £2,200, or nearly 12s. per member, than what we disbursed for this benefit during the previous year, whilst our assistance payments were reduced by £1,377, although we paid out for these extra grants the substantial sum of £1,261 during the year. Our Sick Benefit, however, showed the most important variation. Our Auxiliary Fund had become a benefit-paying institution from the beginning of the year, and a substantial increase in our Sick and Funeral

Benefit was inevitable. Few, however, were prepared for the actual results. Our expenditure amounted to £2,120, or 10s. 0½d. per member, an increase of £667, or 2s. 7½d. per member over the previous year's figures, and as our total expenditure for Auxiliary Benefit amounted to £305, it follows that more than double these figures were expended in excess of our general average, because of the institution of the Auxiliary Fund, a result which has continued and increased in an almost regular ratio until the present day.

1899.

Employment was not quite so good during this year as in 1898, although the general conditions were on a fairly high level. The number of our members out of work ranged from twenty-two in January to 153 in March, the average over the year being ninety-three and the percentage 2.1, as compared with sixty-one and 1.5 respectively for the previous year. On this account our efforts to obtain improved conditions were not so general or so successful as during 1898.

Our most important movement during the year was upon the Mersey, where application was made for an advance of 2s. per week, a gentle stimulus being applied in the shape of a stoppage of overtime. An offer of 1s. per week was made and refused. We then proposed to halve the difference and make the advance 1s. 6d., which we were prepared to accept in two instalments. However, the employers refused to budge, and our members came out on strike for an amount which would have made their wages up to 40s. per week. We had previously invited the A.S.E. patternmakers to join us, but their District Committee declined our proposed alliance and even refused to stop overtime. A few non-associated firms granted our demand for a 40s. rate, whilst their associated brethren withdrew the offer they had made during the negotiating period.

It was at this point that the local organising delegate of the A.S.E., himself a patternmaker, made a slashing onslaught upon our society because of the circumstances and methods—or want of them—of the strike. This attack naturally provoked a strong rejoinder, and we are quite safe in inferring that the edifying spectacle of two Trade Unions engaged

in a slanging match during the currency of a strike which affected both was fully known and keenly appreciated by the local employers. However, a sign of contrition on the part of our contemporaries was evidenced when the A.S.E. met the Employers' Federation in connection with a wages question affecting the Mid-Lancashire district, where our Mersey strike was mentioned and a renewed offer made to the A.S.E. patternmakers of 1s. per week, which, at the suggestion of the representative of that society, was enlarged so as to include our members. This offer we accepted, and expected that the whole affair had ended, when we were informed that the offer was contingent upon a pledge from our society that we work harmoniously with non-society men, otherwise our members would not be allowed to start. Needless to say, we declined to give any such pledge, and it was some weeks before our members filtered into the shops which were represented on the local Employers' Federation.

We participated in a joint wages movement at Bradford, where 1s. advance was granted. Toward the end of the year a further joint application was sent in for an advance, to include Shipley, but it was found impossible to settle locally, and the matter was remitted to London, where, after five months' negotiation, 1s. advance was recommended and accepted, we, of course, not being represented during the later and effective stages of the movement.

On the Clyde an unsuccessful attempt was made to obtain time and a-half for overtime from the Iron and Steel Founders' Association. No better fortune befel us in an application for an advance of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per hour, which was withdrawn after some fruitless negotiation with the employers. We, however, had a strike at Glengarnock for an advance of 1d. per hour on a wage rate of 34s. for fifty-seven hours.

At Barrow a joint movement in which we were concerned was initiated to obtain the fifty-three hours, and we had some trouble with the local iron works regarding overtime rates, which we remedied by refusing to work any overtime until these rates were satisfactorily adjusted. At Dundee we made application for 1s. advance, but withdrew a few weeks afterwards because of a falling off in trade.

At St. Helens we succeeded in obtaining the co-operation of the A.S.E. and S.E.M. to an application for a 2s. per week advance. We received the offer of one-half of that amount; but before a settlement could be made the movement spread to other trades throughout Mid-Lancashire, and we perforce had to accept the terms agreed to by the general body, which was 1s., with leave to apply for a further 1s. in July if the state of trade warranted it. Needless to say, it did, and a provisional 1s. was granted, the question of its permanency being submitted to an eminent judge. We, however, managed to secure the second 1s., making our rate 38s.

At Halifax we had a rather unique experience. We sought the assistance of the non-society element in an application for a 2s. advance. This was accorded, and several non-associated shops agreed to give the full amount. The Federated employers were not so amenable, and our members came out on strike, and were, as might have been expected, promptly deserted by their quandom allies. However, in time our fixed rate of 36s. was paid, and it does not appear that any of our members had to leave the district to obtain their rate. But this is probably the first and only time that we entered into a definite alliance with non-union men only to obtain improved conditions. This was certainly a case of adversity making strange bed-fellows.

Edinburgh and Leith initiated a wages movement at the same time as the Clyde and with similar results. They, however, succeeded in obtaining an advance in Kirkcaldy sufficient to assimilate the rates in the two districts.

Other advances were: Devonport, $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per hour; Rochdale, 2s. in two instalments, making our rate 36s.; Bristol, $\frac{1}{2}$ d. to $8\frac{1}{2}$ d. per hour. At Leeds we secured the co-operation of the A.S.E. in a movement for a 2s. advance. This promise of assistance became so watered down that when the time for conference arrived the representatives of the two societies could not appear before the employers together, so they were heard separately; and they got no more than they deserved by a point blank refusal. Little better results awaited us in Keighley, where we sought an advance in our rate of wages from 32s. to 34s. per week. We had to withdraw several of our members and expel others who refused to come out. Our Derby Branch succeeded in establishing

a 34s. rate for Burton, and at Oldham our members abandoned an attempt to raise wages owing to the refusal of the A.S.E. and S.E.M. to co-operate. At Lincoln, where we had no one but ourselves to consult, we obtained 2s. advance, a concession subsequently extended to the members of that branch working in Great Yarmouth, and a similar concession was obtained at Llanelly, where similar conditions existed, whilst at Nottingham, where we sought the co-operation of our contemporaries, the A.S.E. and S.E.M., no progress was possible because of the delay in consolidating our forces. In Swansea we were more fortunate in securing the assistance of the A.S.E., and after a short partial strike we obtained the payment of a rate of 38s. 3d. for fifty-four hours, whilst at Briton Ferry we raised our wages from 32s. and 33s. to 36s. per week.

We had our usual crop of disputes apart from wages questions. At Ipswich a new system was introduced which bore a very strong resemblance to the premium bonus system. Following our invariable custom at that time, our members were instructed to have nothing to do with any system of payment of wages except plain time rates, and as soon as the firm understood that we really meant business the proposed system was withdrawn, so far as we were concerned.

In Glasgow our members were withdrawn from one firm who attempted to introduce a joiner into their patternshop, whilst similar objections, expressed in the same way, occurred in Johnstone at a firm which seemed to have a predeliction for joiners.

A General Council meeting was held in September of this year, but the business transacted was not of great importance, protests against the ruling of the E.C. being dismissed as a general rule. The only original question considered by that body was the proposed formation of a National Conciliation Board with the Federated Engineering Employers. It was felt that such a formation would be founded upon the engineering trade's "Provisions for Avoiding Disputes," which might also extend to the piecework clauses of these terms of settlement. Discreet negotiations were opened up with a representative of the Employers' Federation, and we were assured that no clause of the engineers' agreement

would be applied to us other than the provisions for avoiding disputes, and this would only mean that we would discard the precious privilege we then and now possess, if we cared to use it, of rushing headlong into a dispute and enter into negotiations with the employers afterwards. However, the matter was submitted to a vote of the members and rejected by 507 to 405 votes. Had the vote gone in favour, the probability is that we would ultimately have become merged in the engineers' terms of agreement, with possible exemption clauses in regard to payment by result; but as it was, all our members were asked to do was to apply the North-East Coast Conciliation Board to the society at large. A curious feature of the voting was that the branches in that district voted against the national application of a principle which they had accepted for themselves.

The question of appointing a permanent Organiser cropped up at this meeting, but was decisively rejected on a vote of the society, 152 voting for such an appointment, and 870 against.

At the same time, London was given a second term of three years as the locality for our seat of government.

An important change in our form of investments took place during the year. Previously we had limited ourselves to placing our superfluous cash with public bodies; we now extended our loans to house property investments. These advances were at first limited to the balances representing the Superannuation Reserve and Auxiliary Sick and Funeral Funds, and whilst the E.C.C. were free to make such advances to those outside our society, this latitude was never exercised, and our loans were limited to our own members and upon houses intended for their own occupation, whilst it was subsequently decided to include our General Fund balances in our house property operations.

During the year we devoted considerable attention to the General Federation of Trades, which was being promoted by the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress. The rules were published in our Monthly Report and freely commented on by many of the branches. The voting, however, was decisive, as by 931 to 368 votes the members decided against affiliation.

The net average result of our various efforts to improve our wage rate appears almost negligible and is represented by the modest sum of 2d., our average having been raised from £1 17s. to £1 17s. 2d. during the year. In other directions, however, our development was more noticeable. One branch was added to our number, which, at the end of the year, reached sixty-eight. During the year we admitted 421 new members, of whom twenty-five were Trade Protection members. Our expulsions were more numerous than usual, numbering 204; our gain for the year being 209, and our total membership 4,417.

Our financial results were extremely satisfactory. Income amounted to £12,525, or £2 16s. 8½d. per member. Expenditure was £6,679, or £1 10s. 3d. per member. Our gain for the year reached £5,845, which, added to our balance brought forward, gave us a total balance of £26,498, of £6 per member. None of our various funds call for special comment, the expenditure for unemployed and sick being 8s. 3d. and 11s. 5d. per member respectively. Management, however, showed a considerable reduction and cost each member 6s. 8d. for the year, which was much less than the average of former years.

1900.

Trade was by no means good during the year, and certainly it could not truly be described as bad. There was an absence of buoyancy throughout the whole year, which stifled undue optimism, and which created the uneasy feeling that any change would be for the worse, yet up to the end of the year our out-of-work barometer was fairly steady, with a slight upward tendency during the last three months. The average number of our unemployed members was 146 and our percentage was 3.2, being one-half as many more as we had on our books for the previous year.

The industrial conditions in general appear to have been much less favourable than are indicated in the foregoing figures, as our various movements to improve working conditions were neither numerous nor successful. The most important was at Leeds, where we succeeded in enlisting the A.S.E. in our movement to obtain an advance of 2s. per

week. Our application was unsuccessful, and our members, to the number of sixty-eight, accompanied by thirty A.S.E. and ten non-society men, came out on strike. The dispute dragged on for some fifteen weeks and terminated by our withdrawing our demands and resuming work at the old rates of wages.

Our Llanelly members were much more successful, and succeeded in raising their minimum rate from 33s. to 37s. per week, whilst at Preston the advent of an American electric engineering firm afforded us the opportunity of raising our rate by 1s. per week, and we managed to obtain a 2s. advance at Darlaston. We were not so fortunate at the neighbouring town of Wolverhampton, where, after wasting some months in a fruitless attempt to obtain the assistance of the A.S.E. and S.E.M., we sent in an application to raise our rates from 34s. to 36s. per week. We met with no better success at Birmingham and Oldham, where wages movements were abandoned owing to our failure to secure the support of our contemporaries.

Altogether the year was singularly barren, so far as wages advances were concerned. Our average rate increased by 2½d. to £1 17s. 4½d.

Of much greater interest and importance were the joint movements to maintain the weekly payment of wages on the Clyde, and to obtain the fifty-three hours. With regard to the former question, weekly pays had been provisionally granted for an experimental twelve months, their continuance depending upon the time-keeping of the workmen. At the end of the period the employers intimated their desire to revert to the fortnightly system, and produced figures to prove that whilst the time-keeping of the time workers had slightly improved under the new system, the pieceworkers had lost much more time than under the old system of fortnightly pays. The negotiations on behalf of the workmen were, as before, conducted by the Federation of Engineering and Ship-building Trades, who took a vote upon the question, when it was shown that a large majority were in favour of the retention of weekly pays, and were also in favour of resisting any attempt at reversion. The Federation further offered to submit the matter to the arbitration of the Board of Trade

under the Conciliation Act. This was refused, and as one of the chief unions declined to give an assurance of co-operation if a strike was declared, the whole movement was hung up until more unanimity could be secured and better opportunity was afforded of permanently assimilating the system of paying wages in England and Scotland. So once more the A.S.E., by assuming a policy of passiveness, completely dominated the situation. A joint movement at Kilmarnock to secure this concession was abandoned, when a reversion to fortnightly pays took place on the Clyde.

Our Sheffield members, stimulated, no doubt, by the fact that the moulders of that city had obtained a fifty-three-hour week, invited the co-operation of the A.S.E. and S.E.M. in an attempt to obtain a similar concession. At Lincoln we associated with other trades with a similar object in view, but subsequently withdrew, whilst at Barrow a serious and sustained joint effort was made to obtain this reduction of one hour per week, and a date was fixed when it was proposed that the change should take place. This brought the National Employers' Federation on to the scene, and an intimation was sent from that body stating that any action taken against the Barrow firm would lead to reprisals by the Federation, notwithstanding the fact that the leading firms in that body had been working the fifty-three hours for several years. At the same time the societies bound by the engineers' terms of agreement intimated that nothing must be done until the Provisions for Avoiding Disputes had been complied with. This took the question out of the hands of the Federation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades and of those engineering societies which were, like our own, not bound by these terms. The ultimate result was that the chief firm in Barrow absolutely refused to reduce the hours. The workmen then offered to work two extra half-hours during the week, so as to cease work at noon on Saturdays. The firm were quite willing to make this arrangement, but the A.S.E. refused their assent, and sent an intimation to the firm to this effect, which effectually put a quietus to the extension of the fifty-three hours to Barrow, Huddersfield, and, in fact, anywhere else.

Other movements included a revision of the overtime conditions at Edinburgh and Leith, where extra rates were not

paid until 108 hours were worked. By negotiation this limitation was reduced by one-half.

In the northern district of Glasgow we sought to enforce standard wage rates by an embargo on overtime, and withdrew our members because the non-society element insisted on working late. We also strengthened our faith in our "no piecework" policy by warning our members of the penalties they would incur by accepting employment at the only Clyde firm who worked this system, the question arising because of the employment by the firm in question of joiners at our trade. As these interlopers happened to be society men, we successfully appealed to their organisation for their immediate withdrawal.

A quite new departure was an agreement between the engineering trades and the Ebbw Vale Iron and Coal Company for a sliding scale arrangement, which governed the South Wales iron and steel trades. It was the first arrangement of the kind which applied to our trade, and, so far as we know, it has never been extended to any other district.

During the year quite a number of our members volunteered for active service in the Boer War, which we considered quite a big thing at the time. The E.C. declined to sanction the payment by the society of the contributions of these members, although reservists called up were placed upon a more favourable footing.

We added two branches to our numbers during the year, which brought our total up to seventy. Our membership showed its usual steady growth, 437 new entrants being recorded, of whom eighteen were Trade Protection members. Exclusions numbered 166; our net gain amounting to 187, leaving us with a total membership at the end of the year of 4,604 members.

Financially we did uncommonly well. Our total income realised £13,067, or £2 16s. 9d. per member. Expenditure amounted to £8,280, or £1 15s. 11d. per member, giving us a gain of £4,786 for the year, our total balance reaching the substantial sum of £31,281, or £6 15s. 10½d. per member. This result was all the more gratifying because of the circumstance that our Unemployed Benefit had been heavier than we had experienced for five years, and was 50 per cent.

more than we spent for this purpose the year previously; whilst our Sick Benefit showed a substantial increase on the previous year's figures.

1901.

The state of trade during this year can be described as fair. There was no general unsatisfied demand for pattern-makers, neither was there any abnormal unemployment in our trade. The figures showing the condition of trade were somewhat more favourable than those for 1900, our monthly average being 136, or ten less than the average for the year previous, the percentage being 2.9 and 3.2 respectively. There were indications, however, that trade was falling off, the returns for the two last months of the year showing a substantial increase in the number of our members signing our vacant books. It is somewhat remarkable that during the year only one attempt was made to obtain an increase of wages; that was in Dundee, and the application was for an advance of $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per hour. We met with a refusal, and fifty-four of our members lifted their tools. They were out for eight weeks, and returned to work exactly as they left it.

A suggested movement at Belfast got no further than suggestion.

Where we failed others were more successful. The A.S.E. succeeded in obtaining an official advance of 1s. per week in the London district, in which we participated. It was a lop-sided, scrappy affair, and was only partially observed by the London employers. Even some firms connected with the Employers' Federation ignored it.

It is interesting to note that the engineering trades who had agreed that their wages should be governed by a sliding scale found that the tendency was to slide down rather than up. At all events, the wages of our trade sunk to 25s. 9d., in spite of an undertaking that their minimum rates should be 27s. per week.

We had a dispute with a Derby firm re overtime rates. They wished to limit the payment for overtime to bare time rates, which resulted in the shop being closed to our members. A further dispute occurred at a firm in Govan as to lifting checks at the ship's side. After a twenty-one days' strike five minutes were allowed the men to get to their work.

This sums up our achievements to better our conditions during this uneventful year.

Some slight alterations of rules were effected during the year. An attempt was made to realise the surplus balance of our General Funds for advances to our members for the purpose of enabling them to purchase their own houses. This proposal was lost, the necessary two-thirds majority not being obtained. A proposal to build or purchase premises for a General Office was rejected by a substantial majority, whilst, by 582 to 323 votes, we declined to affiliate with the Labour Representation Committee. Our advances on house property from the Superannuation Reserve Fund were legalised and duly registered.

A proposal of the Federation of Engineering and Ship-building Trades to assume the responsibility of appeals under the Workmen's Compensation Act to the highest court of appeal was carried by an overwhelming majority and accepted by the affiliated trades. Very little use, however, was made of this scheme, which has been dropped for some years.

We added one branch to our numbers during the year, our total number of branches reaching seventy. The new members admitted numbered 487, which included seventeen Trade Protection members, and our exclusions reached 189, an increase in the numbers recorded for the previous year. Our net gain in membership was 233, which gave us a total membership at the end of the year of 4,837.

Our total income was the largest in our history and amounted to £14,072, or £2 18s. 2½d. per member. Our expenditure reached £7,957, or £1 12s. 10¼d. per member, our gain for the year being £6,114, which gave us a total balance of £37,396, or £7 14s. 7½d. per member.

Except for our gain in membership and cash, 1901 must be regarded as a drab and colourless year.

1902.

Not much of interest can be recorded for the year under review. Trade throughout the year was dull, our average unemployed members reaching 159, our percentage being the same as during 1900—3.2. The year was absolutely

unrelieved by any attempt to obtain improved workshop conditions. No question relating to wages arose, and our activities were limited to a trifling demarcation dispute with the moulders at Edinburgh, and a strike at Kilmarnock, with the object of unifying our wage rate in that town, and which resulted in our blocking the struck firm.

An alteration of rules proposed by the E.C., which had for its object the lending of money to our members in order to purchase houses for their own occupation, was carried at the second time of asking, and was duly incorporated in our rules. A further alteration increased the salary of the E.C. Treasurer from 30s. to £3 per annum. We also took the first step toward identifying ourselves with direct Parliamentary representation, on a resolution from the Erith Branch, when the opinions of the branches were invited; and the E.C. asked the society to vote as to holding a General Council meeting to consider the expressed views of the branches, as well as to deal with any other relevant business which had accumulated since the last meeting of that body. This the society agreed to by an almost unanimous vote, and the Council met in London at the beginning of December.

The most important business transacted was that relating to Labour representation, and a resolution was passed "affirming the principle of the direct representation of Labour in Parliament, as also upon all representative elective bodies, and authorising the E.C. to grant from the Assistance Fund such sums as they deemed advisable toward the expenses and lost time of any of our members who contested these positions with the approval and sanction of their branches and of local representative organisations."

Other business prohibited members from doing any pattern-making off the premises of the employer for whom he was working after his regular day's work was done. Some of the Scottish branches wished an Organising Delegate appointed for Scotland, and it was decided that this question, together with a proposal for the appointment of an Assistant Secretary, be submitted to a vote of the members, both proposals being rejected. Our right to sandpaper and varnish patterns was affirmed, and various other questions of minor importance were dealt with, no important decision of the E.C. being reversed on appeal. The triennial election of locality

for seat of government was held at the end of this year, and after three votes had been taken Leeds proved successful, and in due course the sexennial migration took place into Yorkshire.

Our rate of wages remained at the same average figure as for the previous year—£1 17s. 5d. We added three branches to our numbers during the year, making our total seventy-four. Our new members, including sixteen Trade Protection members, numbered 522, whilst exclusions reached the high total of 199, our gain being 283, leaving us with a total membership of 5,120 at the end of the year.

Our total income amounted to £14,665, or £2 17s. 3½d. per member. Expenditure was £8,057, or £1 11s. 5½d. per member, our gain for the year being by far the highest ever recorded in our history and amounting to £6,607, which gave us a total cash balance at the end of the year of £44,004, or £8 11s. 10¾d. per member.

1903.

Trade as a whole during this year was fairly brisk and employment plentiful, with the exception of a slight falling off during the last quarter. Considerable activity was shown by employers in enforcing reductions and by the attempts of workmen to resist or postpone their operation, and latterly to retrieve the positions already lost.

The first attack was made by Clyde employers, who demanded a reduction of ¼d. per hour, or 1s. per week. There was no justification for this demand so far as we were concerned, as our trade was fairly well employed. There was no doubt, however, that the major section of the engineering trade were not so well situated as we were. The employers, however, insisted upon dealing with all sections as one unit. For the first time in its history the Federation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades sought to consolidate the "resistance" movement by proposing that they negotiate with the employers on behalf of the general body of workmen. This the Employers' Federation readily agreed to, with the quite reasonable proviso that the affiliated trades should forego their right to sectional conferences. This was much too big an order for those who preached the doctrine of the solidarity of Labour—as applied to other organisations than their own—

and they flatly refused to delegate the presentation of their case to any outside body. Eventually, however, the employers did consent to discuss the general question of a reduction of wages with the Federation Executive, but nothing but an academic exchange of views resulted, except that one month's extension of the notices was granted to enable the various societies to present their particular point of view to the employers and suffer defeat in detail.

We had our meeting and received the same treatment as our contemporaries, viz., that the reduction must be enforced, and on a ballot vote, 187 voted for, and 401 against acceptance. An incomplete census of the shops affected showed that of 684 employed, of whom 554 were free members, there were forty Trade Protection members, twenty-four members of other societies, forty-two non-society men, and 376 apprentices.

A further conference was resultless, and as the position was hopeless owing to the other trades, with the exception of the A.S.E., having accepted the reduction, our members submitted to the inevitable, and by 364 to 119 votes decided to accept the employers' terms, a decision which ultimately referred to Edinburgh and Leith. It may be noted that the A.S.E. members on the Clyde took the bit between their teeth and came out on strike, but fared no better than those who had accepted the reduction.

We were more fortunate on the North-East Coast, where we urged the inadequacy of the differential rate between ours and the other sections of the engineering trade. The employers agreed with our views on this point and withdrew their demand against our trade.

We were not so fortunate at Dundee, where the Clyde reduction was enforced against our trade. After an abortive conference and in accordance with our agreement with the Barrow employers these terms were enforced against our members in the latter district.

At Belfast we got to loggerheads with the principal firm in that town owing to their enforcement of 1s. reduction without notice. It appeared they had an agreement with the A.S.E. and Joiners that wages should rise and fall with the Clyde. The first intimation we had of this arrangement

was when our members were paid 1s. short. They failed to obtain any redress by deputation, and lifted their tools, leaving fourteen A.S.E. patternmakers in the shop.

The action of the leading firm was subsequently followed by the whole of their contemporaries, with the exception that one month's notice was given, and our strike was extended to an unassociated marine shop, which usually followed the lead of the Queen's Island firm, a complete clearance being effected as a result. Our men there were only out for a week, the firm intimating that on inquiry they had ascertained that they were not paying their patternmakers more than other firms in the same line of business. Ultimately the notice of reduction was withdrawn against our members, the 1s. already refunded, and the wages of the A.S.E. patternmakers who had remained at work raised to our standard.

At Swansea an unsuccessful attempt was made by one firm to enforce a 1s. reduction; a general resistance to this demand, however, procured its withdrawal.

Our activities during the year were not, however, confined to resisting wage reductions. At Bradford attempts were made to level up the wages of a firm who operated in that town, but who paid the Leeds rates. Llanelly made an effort to obtain an advance of $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per hour. In neither case does success appear to have followed our efforts. At Wolverhampton we fixed our rate at 36s. per week and withdrew all members paid at less than that figure. At Manchester we invited the co-operation of the A.S.E. and S.E.M. in a movement to fix the rate of our trade at 42s., an advance of 2s. The latter society regarded the time as inopportune, but toward the end of the year we obtained the assistance of the A.S.E. in a deputation to the employers, when we were courteously but firmly told that no advance would be granted. We were a little more fortunate at Rochdale, where a joint deputation of the three societies obtained the concession of 1s. per week advance, "Provided the condition of trade is as good at the end of January, 1904, as now." It was.

On the Clyde we were no more fortunate than at Manchester, although we had no one to consult or to wait for except ourselves. We had our conference with the employers, but nothing could be extracted from them. At Carlisle we had

not even this sorry consolation, the chief firm there absolutely refusing to even talk about an advance of wages. At Huddersfield we fixed our rate at 36s. per week, which at that time appeared to be the most successful way of raising wages, as we did not, during the year, succeed in obtaining a single unconditional advance of wages as the result of formal or concerted action.

Other industrial movements included an attempt by a Liverpool firm to introduce the one-break system, which the workmen were willing to accept provided it was accompanied by an eight-hour day. The proposed change was ultimately dropped.

At Sheffield our members made an abortive attempt to obtain the fifty-three hours, but as the A.S.E. declined to co-operate we could do nothing.

The Clyde weekly pay question was resuscitated at the beginning of the year, a local committee of Clyde workmen having been appointed to obtain a reversion to this system. They did not succeed in even obtaining a conference with the employers, and eventually handed the whole matter over to the Federation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades, who were faced with the difficulty that as the A.S.E. had seceded from their body they no longer represented the engineering industry. The A.S.E. had, however, affiliated with the General Federation of Trades, and the difficulty was solved after considerable delay by the latter body accepting an invitation to co-operate with the Engineering Federation—a complicated, roundabout, and clumsy way of obtaining the assistance of the organisation which most mattered, and which meant the introduction of an element such as the textile and bootmaking trades, who had no earthly interest in the movement. However, the Federated Trades did manage to do something on their own initiative: winter hours were being worked, and they passed a resolution, to which we were parties, that any work done over the curtailed hours must be paid for at overtime rates.

The question of Labour representation was raised by resolutions from Glasgow and Govan in favour of supporting a Parliamentary candidate from our society. The E.C. varied this proposal by taking a vote as to the propriety of our

affiliation with the Labour Representation Committee, which was carried by 959 to 199 votes, thus reversing a vote taken a short time previously. This, however, was as far as we felt inclined to go. A resolution, that we run a member of our society as a Parliamentary candidate, was coupled with a proposal that he be paid not less than £200 and reasonable expenses, to meet which cost a levy of 3d. per quarter be imposed on each member, was rejected by 859 to 512 votes; whilst the interest of the society in the question was indicated by only twenty out of seventy-four branches taking the trouble to express their views upon the general principle of Labour representation.

The question of the bonus system was raised by the E.C., who invited the branches to give certain specified information with regard to its working, as also to give their general observations and suggestions. The response was so meagre that the E.C. abandoned their intention to publish a special pamphlet giving the result of their inquiries, on the ground that our fears as to the prevalence and growth of this system was unfounded and there were no indications that any extension of payment by result was to be feared.

It was decided, on the proposition of the E.C., that a complete alteration of rules should take place during 1904, and the last few months of the year were occupied by the work of the revision committees and the tabulation and issue of the result of their labours.

Our progress with regard to branches was not remarkable during the year, only one addition being made to our numbers, making our total seventy-five. We, however, fully atoned for any omission on that score by our increase in membership, which established a new record: 656 recruits were enrolled, twenty-six being Trade Protection members. Our exclusions numbered 179, which was less than our proportionate average. Our net gain in membership was 407, giving us a total membership of 5,527 at the end of the year.

We also broke all financial records during 1903. Our income amounted to £16,006, or £2 17s. 11½d. per member, the highest aggregate in our history. Expenditure amounted to £8,501, or £1 10s. 9d. per member, giving us the record

gain of £7,505 and a total balance of £51,509, or £9 6s. 4½d. per member.

As has already been indicated, trade was generally dull throughout the year, although our percentage of unemployed, 2.7, was by no means excessive, and was more favourable than we had experienced for the three previous years. Trade, however, fell off considerably during the last four months, and it was at this period that we incurred most of our expenditure for Out-of-Work Benefit. The average worked out at 10s. 3¼d. per member, which corresponded with the average number of members we had out of work during the year. Sick Benefit showed the upward tendency, induced by the establishment of the Auxiliary Sick and Funeral Fund, and which continued with but little variation until the enforcement of the National State Insurance Act.

1904.

This year was unrelieved by a single attempt to improve wages conditions. Trade was bad throughout the whole country, and its effect was an almost complete paralysis of our workshop activities. Toward the end of the year the North-East Coast Shipbuilders' Association intimated a reduction of 5 per cent. on piecework and 1s. to 1s. 6d. on time workers, which was accepted. A few of our members in Hartlepool were effected, and the reduction does not appear to have extended beyond this area. We had, however, a few minor questions, which we handled with more or less success. At Chatham Dockyard we again brought before the Admiralty our grievance against the shipwrights working at our trade. We did not on that occasion obtain the success we certainly deserved, were it only as a reward for our persistency.

In Kilmarnock, where we had withdrawn our members from a firm who refused to pay our rate of wages, we ascertained that an important contract had been placed by the London County Council, and after inquiries made on the spot we ascertained that our action had been successful and that the non-society men who had filled our places had been paid our full rates.

We took part in a joint movement at Barrow to obtain Clyde overtime rates for working at holiday time. An attempt

to introduce the premium bonus system into an Edinburgh establishment was thwarted by the determined attitude of our members, although this system had been applied to every other shop in the firm except the patternshop. Our Lincoln Branch established a rate of 32s. per week for that district.

A joint movement was instituted on the Clyde dealing with winter hours, a resolution being passed by the Federation that time worked over the curtailed hours be paid at overtime rates. It is questionable if a single member of our society was concerned, so our acquiescence with the resolution involved us in no responsibilities. Whether as a reminder or a stimulus, the Dumbarton Branch considered it necessary to remind our members that the chief shop in that town was still blocked owing to their working piecework. At Chesterfield a 10 per cent. reduction was notified by one of the largest shops. An exodus of our members was the result, and a notification given that the rate of wages was 36s. per week.

Something of a comedy was enacted as Wolverhampton, where we complained to the Town Council that one of their contractors was not paying our current rate of wages. We were accorded an interview with the appropriate committee and found ourselves opposed by an exceedingly able and persistent opponent, who, however, did not appear to have the most rudimentary idea of our trade, and it was not until the close of the proceedings that we incidentally learnt that our doughty adversary was not a representative of the firm, but was the Town Clerk. Needless to say, we got no satisfaction.

The most important event of the year was the holding of a delegate meeting to effect a complete alteration of rules. The meeting was held in Leeds from May 23rd to 31st, was attended by fifty-five delegates, and cost £400 1s. 11d. The new code of rules came into operation the first meeting in January, 1905. There were 905 amendments contained in the schedule of proposed alterations, but only eighty-four actual alterations were effected, most of which were minor and unimportant.

Amongst the more important alterations was an undertaking to take up cases under the Employers' Liability Act

and Workmen's Compensation Act, the expenses to be charged to Contingent Fund. A further obligation we assumed was the promotion of direct Labour representation in Parliament and on all elective bodies, for which purpose a fund, not to exceed £1,000, was to be formed by a deduction of 1s. per member per annum from the General Funds. Both these proposals were added to the objects of the society, but the latter was struck out by the Registrar as being contrary to the Trade Union Act.

Other alterations were: An increase in the numbers and emoluments of branch officers. Trade Benefit was increased to members of ten years' continuous membership, the enhanced scale being 12s. per week for fourteen weeks, 9s. for fourteen weeks, 7s. for twenty-four weeks, and 5s. for remainder of unemployment period; this being the first time we adopted the principle of continuous benefit, except for superannuation. Funeral Benefit was increased from £13 to £15, and the minimum Tool Benefit was reduced from 10s. to half that amount. On the other hand, the contributions of foremen members and those who had left the trade and transferred to honorary membership were raised from 5d. to 6d. per week, and a reduction of 1d. per week was made in the contributions of Trade Protection members, the reduction being from 5d. to 4d.

Several alterations were made in the Auxiliary Sick and Funeral Fund. A penalty of 1d. per week was exacted against members of this fund who transferred to honorary membership in the parent society. The age of admission was reduced from 45 to 40 years of age, and an entrance fee of 3s. was charged to all new members; and, most important of all, Superannuation Benefit was instituted of 2s. per week after fifteen years' membership in the fund, to be contingent upon the receipt of that benefit from the parent society.

For some extraordinary reason it was decided to stop advances to members on the security of a house intended for their own occupation. The probable reason was that a majority of the delegates objected to a small section of their fellows being tainted with capitalism. This decision did not affect our advances from Auxiliary Fund, which, however, were an almost negligible quantity.

It may be noted that during this year your General Secretary was put forward as a candidate to represent the Trades Union Congress at the San Francisco Convention of the American Federation of Labour. There were twelve candidates, and he was the highest unsuccessful candidate, being defeated by twelve votes.

The conditions of trade throughout the year may be gathered from the tables showing our roll of unemployed members. The average for the year was 370, the monthly returns varying from 240 in April to 514 in October. Our percentage was 6.7, being 4 per cent. more than for the year previous and showing the highest proportion since 1895.

We were very successful in widening our sphere of influence, four new branches having been opened during the year, our total number of branches being eighty. In spite of bad trade our membership returns were of the usual satisfactory character, 548 new members having been admitted, which included fifteen Trade Protection members. Our exclusions were unusually heavy and numbered 213. The addition to our membership was 273, giving us a total of 5,800 at the end of the year.

Our financial transactions during the year could not be considered as anything but satisfactory, considering the circumstances. Income amounted £17,066, or £2 18s. 10d. per member. Expenditure was the highest aggregate in our history and amounted to £13,772, or £2 7s. 5½d. per member. It is worth noting, however, that this was only £1,100 more than we spent in 1894—ten years previously, when we had little more than half the membership of 1904, the difference per member being £1 17s., as representing the amount we spent during the former year. Our gain for the year amounted to £3,293, which gave us a total balance at the end of 1904 of £54,802, or £9 9s. per member.

The comparatively unfavourable results of this year's financial operations were due to the condition of trade, £7,212, or £1 14s. 10½d. per member, being the cost to the society of our Unemployed Benefit during the year—more than double our expenses under this heading for the twelve previous months. A minor cause of our heavy expenditure was the delegate meeting, which accounted for the difference

in our management costs for the year under consideration and the previous years.

1905.

The strike of our trade throughout the Clyde district overshadowed everything else, and little of importance was even attempted during the six months this dispute lasted. Our application was modest enough, an advance of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per hour being sought. We were met by a point blank refusal, and after a ballot vote, but without the usual formality of a conference, our members came out on strike on April 15th. There were 713 members of our society concerned, together with twenty members of the A.S.E., five S.E.M., and some half-a-dozen non-society men. The non-associated firms numbered sixty, twenty-six of whom granted the advance to 137 of our members. Twenty-four other firms proved obdurate, and seventy-three of their patternmakers were accordingly added to the strike roll. The remaining shops were not interfered with, as they had been paying the rate we were seeking for some time, whilst two locomotive shops, employing twenty-three of our members, were not cleared until a fortnight's notice had been given. This was by far the most important strike we had ever entered into, 13.1 of our total membership being involved. The nearest approach to this number was our strike on the North-East Coast eleven years previously, when just under 9 per cent. of our members were involved. So far as the sinews of war were concerned, there was no comparison. We entered into the latter dispute with a total balance in hand of £9,720, or about one-sixth of our cash assets, at the commencement of the Clyde strike.

Needless to state, we used every resource open to us to prosecute this dispute to a successful issue. Wherever it was possible to identify Clyde work we placed an embargo on it and generally succeeded in preventing its completion. We went so far as to try to evoke the practical sympathy of the German woodworkers in stopping strike work being done on the Continent. Very little appears to have been even attempted, and it is questionable if any effective action was taken to prevent the completion of the trifling amount of work sent to the Continent. We were not greatly hampered by the introduction of outside labour. Rumour, ever busy

when a big strike is in progress or even in contemplation, had it that "a" free labour association had contracted to supply 300 non-society men. Needless to say, they never materialised. Attempts by individual firms to obtain recruits were generally unsuccessful. The few individuals who were induced to come did not stay long, and the number of men we left in the shops was a negligible quantity. Certainly the prolongation of the struggle and any lack of success we experienced was not due to the fact that we failed to prevent patterns being made. Unsuccessful efforts were made to induce the moulders to refuse to handle patterns—a most unreasonable request. We might as well have asked them to cease work in sympathy with us; and we certainly have never refused to make patterns because they might ultimately be moulded by moulder strike breakers. We carried on a vigorous campaign not only in our own publications but in the Press, whenever opportunity offered. We had several conferences with the employers, one of which was arranged through the good offices of the Lord Provost of Glasgow, but without result.

An important development in the situation took place, when in September an advance of $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per hour was conceded to the engineers, to date from 15th December. As the result of a conference held between the employers and our representatives an offer was made that, subject to work being resumed on Monday, 9th October, 1905, a general advance of $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per hour, or 1s. per week be granted on the 15th or 16th November, the enhanced rate to continue undisturbed for six months; any subsequent alteration to be subject to the customary one month's notice. It was also proposed that the parties meet at a mutually convenient date to consider an arrangement whereby a full discussion of questions would take place before extreme measures by either side were resorted to. These terms were recommended for acceptance by our members' representatives and submitted to a ballot vote—the largest ever taken in the Clyde district—and were rejected, 178 voting for, and 545 against.

No further offer being obtainable from the employers, the local members were asked to give their committee plenary powers to effect a settlement on the basis of $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per hour

advance, to date from the resumption of work. With considerable difficulty the employers were induced to agree to these amended proposals, and work was resumed on Monday, 16th October, 1905, after a strike which lasted exactly six months.

This settlement did not cover the Foundry Employers' Association or the locomotive builders, who were at this time outside the Engineering Employers' Federation, and the strike continued against these two bodies for some time after the general settlement.

It will always be a debatable point whether our strike or the general improvement in trade was the cause of the advance to the engineers, which was the prelude to our settlement. We certainly had no dubiety about it at the time, and we claimed that again we had filled the rôle of pioneers in a wages movement, in regard to which we got all the kicks and others got the ha'pence. If that was so, it must not be forgotten that we voluntarily and deliberately stepped into the breach, asking neither the advice nor assistance of the other trades; so they could not be held responsible for our sacrifices in their cause and interests, if our contention that we obtained an advance for the whole engineering industry on the Clyde was justified.

For the first time in our history we made an appeal through the Federation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades for financial assistance, and received various sums from the Boilermakers, A.S.E., Painters, Northern United Enginemen, S.E.M., Braziers and Sheet Metal Workers, Associated Shipwrights, Scottish Painters, and United Machine Workers. Several of these societies promised us further financial assistance if necessary, and the A.S.E. were taking steps to ballot their members on 1d. levy in our support, when the strike ended. The aggregate amount subscribed did not amount to much, but it was not until some months had elapsed that we made our appeal, and we had about as generous a response as our own donations to others similarly circumstanced justified us in expecting. After all, when a society deliberately decides to come out on strike in order to benefit its own members it must trust to its own strong right arm and the length of its purse for success.

The strike cost the society about £16,000, and it was estimated that the members concerned lost £20,000 in wages. So judging the dispute in terms of £ s. d. we can scarcely claim that our forethought and strategy were remarkable, and moral advantages, where they exist, do not appeal to the average Trade Unionist as being worth a very serious monetary sacrifice, and it is questionable if after sixteen years any of the participants could claim quite as decisive a victory for the Clyde strike as we solaced ourselves with at the time. Certain it is that we gained considerable wisdom and not a little discretion as one of the results, and we have not had a strike of anything like the same magnitude on the Clyde or, as a matter of fact, anywhere else since that memorable struggle.

A feature of this strike, which was not generally known at the time, was the financial difficulties we were threatened with during its closing weeks. Most of our balance was invested in municipal securities, which, it was considered, were easily and readily negotiable. On this account the branches were drained of their superfluous cash without any arrangements being made to utilise our investments for the purposes of carrying on the strike. When this course became inevitable we applied to our bankers for credit on the strength of what we had always looked on as gilt-edged securities. It was something of a surprise to learn that our investments were worthless for the purpose of carrying on a strike, and, in fact, the only security which appeared to have a marketable value was the one we thought least of—our Clyde Trust funded bonds, which we could have sold at their then market price. Several banks in Leeds and in London were interviewed, but no arrangement appeared possible, and in the meantime increasing difficulty was experienced in meeting the continual calls of the Clyde branches for funds.

Fortunately a meeting of the Federation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades was held at the time when our difficulties were most acute, and your General Secretary, on explaining the position, found that he had been taking his wares to the wrong market, and from all sides came offers to either purchase outright or lend to the full face value of any or all our securities. Ultimately the Associated Ironmoulders offered to lend us £10,000 on whatever security we cared

to lodge, and at the rate of interest we were receiving, and a cheque for half that amount was handed over without any legal security whatever. We made no use of this generous advance, as the termination of the strike rendered outside aid unnecessary.

The absorption of all our resources by this strike rendered active operations in other districts impossible. We, however, did manage to attempt and to even carry out a few movements for improved conditions outside the strike area.

At the beginning of the year our Rochdale members, having secured the co-operation of the A.S.E. and S.E.M., succeeded in obtaining an advance of 1s. per week—all they asked for—from the first pay in April.

We were successful in assimilating the rates paid at Rodley and Stanningly with those paid in Leeds, thus removing a long-standing grievance in that district. We had the utmost difficulty in enforcing this concession, which was not granted until we had served the employers with an ultimatum. We had the assistance of the A.S.E. in this movement, which brought the rate in these outlying districts to 37s. per week.

A movement for a 3s. advance in Belfast was hung up owing to the dispute on the Clyde. A similar movement in Grantham resulted in our acceptance of 1s. per week. At Barrow the fifty-three hours was granted, after the most tedious and protracted negotiations, caused by the want of unity amongst the various unions. The concession was ultimately granted at a conference between the Employers' Federation and the union signatory to the 1897 terms of settlement. In addition we obtained an advance of wages of 1s. per week, to date from November 16th. A similar concession was granted our members in Edinburgh and Leith, both advances being in accordance with our agreement that wages should rise and fall with those on the Clyde.

At Devonport we succeeded, after many abortive attempts, in ousting shipwrights from our trade.

Movements for advances in wages were instituted in Dundee and Coventry, whilst Sheffield was identified with a general movement to limit excessive overtime.

Owing to the strike on the Clyde our statistical tables give a quite erroneous idea of our industrial position during

the year. Our average number of members on the books was 579, which was by far the highest aggregate in our history; and the monthly returns varied from 173 in December to 975 in April. The percentage, however, was not so formidable, standing at 9.7, which had been twice exceeded in our published tables.

The troublous times we passed through did not interfere with our usual progress. We opened two branches during the year, making our total eighty-one. Our total admissions numbered 601, twenty-eight being Trade Protection members. The excessive rate of contributions our members were called upon to pay had their inevitable result on our weak-kneed and impecunious members, 261 of whom were excluded; these deflections constituting a record. Our gain in membership was 251, and our total membership at the end of the year numbered 6,051.

Financially we broke all records. Our income from all sources amounted to £22,430, or £3 14s. 1½d. per member, being 10s. 5½d. per member in excess of our previous highest average. Expenditure amounted to £27,315, or £4 10s. 3½d. per member, which exceeded our previous highest figures by 5s. 8½d. per member, and we lost on the year's transactions £4,884, which still left us with the substantial sum of £49,918, or £8 5s. per member.

It may be noted that the amount we received from other Trade Unions in support of our strike on the Clyde was £123. The amount paid by our own members by compulsory levy for the same object was, for Contingent Fund £3,301, and for Assistance Fund £2,301, a total of £5,602. So it cannot be said that we asked assistance from outside trades without having exacted the fullest possible measure of financial support from our own members. In spite of our efforts to pay our way from current income, we wiped out a balance to Contingent Fund of £347, and incurred a deficiency to this fund of £562. We were more fortunate with our Assistance Fund, however, as we closed our yearly accounts with very much the same credit balance as we brought forward from 1904. It must also be noted that no record was kept in our quarterly and annual accounts of the sums voluntarily subscribed throughout the society for the benefit of the local

strike fund, and which amounted to £584, most of which, however, was collected in the local shops. As a matter of fact, we claimed that no body of workmen in the history of industrial warfare had been so well supported as our Clyde members, who, in spite of reduced Trade Benefit, were actually in receipt of more monetary relief at the end than at the beginning of the dispute.

It is worth noting that during the year your General Secretary was elected by the Trades Union Congress to represent that body at the Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labour at Pittsburg. The current Monthly Reports give a full account of his various activities in the United States and Canada.

1906.

Our enforced general inactivity during 1905 with regard to wages movements was amply compensated for by the number and variety of such attempts to improve our workshop conditions during the succeeding year. The conditions of trade, although not entirely favourable, had greatly improved, especially during the first half of the year, when most of our movements to increase wages were launched. A considerable falling off took place toward the end of the year, which was followed by a slackening-off in our various activities. Whilst we had 140 members out of work in January, that number had increased to 405 during December. Our monthly average for the year was 240 and our percentage over the whole year 3.8, which was fairly high.

Our first venture to obtain increased remuneration was on the North-East Coast, where the Conciliation Board agreed to an all-round advance of 1s. per week. Dundee followed suit, with a similar result. A further attempt toward the end of the year, however, was not so successful. All that was done was to arrange to meet the employers in March of the ensuing year and consider our application in the light of the current industrial position. At Coventry our rate was fixed at 9d. per hour, and those who were paid below that figure had little difficulty in obtaining it; and after all, this appears under some circumstances by far the best way of conducting a wages movement, especially when there is a greatly varying rate.

At Leicester we took part in a joint movement for a 2s. advance. The employers were very anxious to institute the one-break system and offered to grant 1s. and a reduction of hours from fifty-four to fifty-one. The men pressed for the 2s. without further reservation, and ultimately the local employers were restrained by their National Executive from pressing for a one-break system, except as part of a national movement. The 1s. was then accepted, with a promise to consider a further and similar advance three months hence, which, in view of the state of trade, was not pressed by the workmen.

At Cowes we succeeded in obtaining an advance of 1s. 6d. as the result of correspondence—a most unusual circumstance. At Belfast an even rarer concession was granted, one of the largest firms in that district spontaneously reducing the hours from fifty-four to fifty per week without any reduction of wages.

We had some trouble on the North-East Coast, where the shipbuilders declined to acknowledge the decisions of the Conciliation Board, which was solved by the withdrawal of such of our members who were not receiving the local standard rate and the placing of an embargo upon all overtime in the firms from which such members had been withdrawn. Sowerby Bridge effected a somewhat unique settlement of their application for a 2s. advance, accepting an immediate 1s., with another nine months hence if the state of trade warranted it.

At Birmingham we initiated a movement for an advance of 2s. at a time when success was absolutely assured. We sought the co-operation of the A.S.E. and S.E.M., and they dallied so long that our opportunity passed, and ultimately they instituted a general movement for a similar advance, in which we perforce participated. It was not until the end of the year that a conference was held with the local employers and a definite refusal given of any concession. The question dragged on for several months, and ultimately it was settled under the engineers' agreement at a Central Conference, at which we were represented for the last time and when 1s. advance was agreed to.

An exceedingly complicated movement took place in Mid-Lancashire during the early part of the year, when our Bury

Branch applied for an advance of 3s. per week. As the result of a conference we received an offer of 1s. at once, and the sub-committee of employers gave an undertaking that they would strongly recommend the grant of a further 1s. three months hence, a definite statement on this point to be given within three weeks. These terms were accepted, and we considered the matter settled. At the same time our Bolton members, after vainly importuning the A.S.E. and S.E.M. to co-operate in a similar application, decided to go in on their own account. We asked for the Bury settlement, which was agreed to. Second thoughts were apparently worse, for we were informed that our Bolton application had completely altered the situation at Bury; that Bolton and Bury were one association, and that the question of the second 1s. would be reconsidered and a reply given by May 8th. Our Bury members were exceedingly anxious to lift their tools, but were restrained by the E.C. pending a further conference with the employers, who had now extended their ramifications to include Oldham and Blackburn. This conference proving abortive, our Bury members ceased work, and a further meeting with the employers was held ten days later, when the second 1s. was granted three months from that date, and the strike terminated.

At Oldham we secured the co-operation of our contemporaries, and after lodging notices secured the Bury terms. We also commenced to exert pressure at Blackburn, Wigan, Rochdale, and Bolton. The first-named district gave way, after carrying their opposition to the breaking point. At Wigan we were offered 1s., the depression in the coal trade adversely affecting the engineering industry in that town, and at Rochdale, where we had been previously offered 1s., we received a point blank refusal. Wigan eventually gave way and granted the Bury terms—1s. advance from June 8th and a further 1s. the first pay in September. But at Rochdale we were not so fortunate, the offer being 1s. the first pay in August and a second shilling the first pay in January. This offer was refused, and a week's notice was sent in by the three societies concerned, all overtime being stopped in the meantime. The employers then played their trump card and wrote the A.S.E. and S.E.M. that, under the Provisions for Avoiding Disputes of the Engineers' 1898 terms of settlement,

no stoppage of work was allowable until the question in dispute had been referred to the Central Authorities. Under these circumstances, rather than submit to the delay and uncertainty of a Central Conference the men concerned accepted the employers' offer.

This series of movements was completed by the acceptance of 1s. per week by our Preston members, which brought them level with the Mid-Lancashire rates, they having been previously paid 1s. above the general average district rate.

These various movements have been detailed in order that the conditions in this important centre, at this time, might be realised. The chief feature of our negotiations with the employers was their lack of co-ordination and consistency. Their local associations coalesced and separated exactly as it suited them. They granted common terms only when and where we could supply the necessary pressure, and their attachment one to the other appeared to be of the flimsiest and most haphazard description; whilst we were in little better case. At Bury, where it was unnecessary to consult anyone but ourselves, we moved quickly, purposely, and effectively. In the other centres, where we had to consult and wait for the other two societies, the uncertainty and delay which characterised our movements were so striking that had it not been that the pace had already been cut out for us at Bury we would never have seen the successful fruition of our efforts. It may be added that three months after the Bury settlement their neighbours of Bolton managed to secure their terms, with the exception that their second 1s. was paid four weeks later.

Our North-East Coast members succeeded in obtaining the recognition of our local district rate in the Darlington foundries, and 1s. per week advance was obtained in the districts adjacent to Carlisle, viz., Workington, Whitehaven, and Parton, and we co-operated with the A.S.E. at Leeds in a general movement which secured a similar all-round advance. At Coatbridge we received an advance of 1s. per week in June, and a further attempt was made in October to obtain a further advance of a similar amount, which, however, had not matured at the end of the year.

Other movements were : In Ashton, 2s., where the co-operation of other societies delayed matters; Oldham, where similar

conditions prevailed, and where it was sought to assimilate the rates paid our trade in textile machinery and engineering shop, a difference of 1s. per week having been the usual practice. Aberdeen applied for 1s., and Kilmarnock and Elland for double that sum, whilst Halifax started at the right end by seeking to improve the organisation of the district, so as to ensure success in their future movements. At Kilmarnock we accepted 1s. advance after a three days' strike, a proposal by the employers that wages be governed by the Clyde not being entertained, owing to their refusal to agree that the difference should be 2s. per week. At Aberdeen a somewhat similar proposal was made by the employers, who wished the difference in the rates of the two districts to be 5s. per week. As no offer could be obtained from the employers our members ceased work on September 6th and continued until 24th April, 1907, when an advance of 1s. per week was agreed to, making our rate 34s. 6d. per week. At Huddersfield, after protracted negotiations, which culminated in our handing in a week's notice to cease work, each firm was allowed to make its own arrangements, with the result that we obtained the 2s. advance for which we had been seeking, making our rate 36s. per week.

We had a somewhat peculiar experience at St. Helens, where we sought the co-operation of the A.S.E. and S.E.M. in an advance of wages movement. Ultimately a joint application for a fifty-three-hour week was substituted; but progress was slow, and as the matter was referred to a Central Conference, our local branch decided to resuscitate the wages question, and as they found it impossible to obtain the co-operation of their fellow unionists, went in on their own, at which point our friends thought better of it and joined us in our conference with the employers, when 1s. advance was agreed to and made retrospective for two weeks.

At Ashton we were again the victims of divided counsels. We succeeded in obtaining the co-operation of other societies in an attempt to obtain an advance of 2s. per week. After some time the A.S.E. withdrew, as they contemplated a general movement, which we eventually joined, when 1s. was granted, and considerable pressure had to be exercised in respect of several non-associated firms who hesitated to give this advance.

At Hull we were involved in a general application for an increase of 2s. per week. A Central Conference was held without result, and the workmen stopped all overtime in federated shops; the employers countering by posting lock-out notices, which became operative so far as contract shops were concerned, the repair shops, where the great majority of the workmen were employed, not being interfered with. As a matter of fact, overtime was freely worked during the course of the dispute, which lasted seven months, and was finally abandoned after it had become an intolerable nuisance to all concerned. Needless to say, the men went in exactly as they came out, and it may be noted the General Federation of Trades stopped benefit some weeks before the strike flickered out.

At Manchester we participated in a joint wages movement with better results. Our application was for an advance of 3s. per week. The 1898 "Terms of Settlement" again threatened to be a stumbling-block, the employers insisting that the allied trades should conform to any agreement made between themselves and the three societies bound by that agreement. This was strenuously opposed by the representatives of our society, and ultimately the nine societies who were not parties to that agreement pledged themselves to abide by the Provisions for Avoiding Disputes provided they were represented at any Central Conference called to consider the application; this arrangement to be temporary and in no way binding upon future local or national movements. The eventual settlement was an advance of 1s. from 3rd November, and an adjourned local conference to be held the first week in the following February to discuss without prejudice an additional advance of 1s. and 2½ per cent. on piece prices.

At Halifax we considered discretion the better part of valour, and hung up an application for an advance, which was refused at a conference, until a more favourable opportunity.

A joint movement in Bradford obtained 1s. advance, and at Stafford we fixed a minimum of 34s., which we had but little difficulty in establishing. An attempt to fix a rate of 9d. per hour in Rugby was delayed owing to the difficulty of getting the A.S.E. and non-society men into line.

At Sheffield, after an abortive attempt to obtain the co-operation of the A.S.E. and S.E.M., we decided to apply for an advance of 2s. per week on our own. Our members at Kinghorn made one of several attempts to assimilate their wages with those of Edinburgh, the difference being $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per hour. They succeeded in obtaining $\frac{1}{2}$ d. right away, with a similar advance the first pay in January. Erith obtained an advance of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per hour as the result of a general movement of engineers, and naturally the London district took immediate steps to obtain a similar concession and establish a rate of 10d. per hour for the Metropolitan area. The A.S.E. associated themselves with us in Rugby in the establishment of a rate of $8\frac{1}{2}$ d. in one break in fifty-two-hour shops and 38s. per week in fifty-three-hour shops. At Grantham and Wolverhampton we took the preliminary steps to obtain a minimum rate of 36s. per week, and at the latter town, as an additional makeweight, we decided to withdraw our members from a shop if the firm persisted in their reprehensible practice of allowing labourers to varnish patterns.

We did not by any means confine our activities to seeking advances in wages during this eventful year. Outside of wages question, by far the most important movement embarked upon by the engineering trade was the Clyde weekly pay question, in which our society took a prominent part. This movement was again taken up by the Federation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades, but as the A.S.E. were not affiliated with that body it was very like Hamlet without the Prince. The difficulty was, however, bridged by asking the General Federation of Trades to associate themselves with the movement, the A.S.E. being members of that body. This brought trades into the question which had not the remotest interest in weekly pays, and it is to their credit that they never sought to obtrude themselves prominently into a question which had only an academic interest for them.

Conferences were held with the Clyde employers, who, however, were resolutely opposed to a resumption of the weekly pay system, and ultimately it was decided to take a vote of the members of both Federations as to whether they were prepared to enforce the payment of weekly wages by a stoppage of work if necessary; the result of the pooled vote being 16,069 votes in favour, and 2,728 against resorting

to extreme measures if necessary. The stumbling-block to a settlement was the question of time-keeping, which, the employers insisted, was worse during the experimental twelve months than when the workmen were paid fortnightly; and they insisted that the unions must make themselves responsible for the better time-keeping of their members. At the same time they acknowledged it only referred to one section of their workmen, viz., the pieceworking trades. The unions refused to be saddled with the responsibility for what was essentially a matter of internal discipline, and would go no further than to pledge themselves to carry out their rules and refuse to pay Unemployed Benefit to any of their members discharged for misconduct, and ultimately notice was given of a general cessation of work on June 2nd, 1906, unless this concession was granted. This had the desired effect, and an offer from the employers was accepted that weekly pays should be granted as from the first full pay after the Glasgow Fair holidays. Thus ended one of the most protracted movements in the history of the engineering and shipbuilding trades.

A stupid and unnecessary strike took place at a large firm of marine engineers in Belfast because a young man started as an improver. Our members were out six weeks, receiving no benefit from the society, and went back exactly as they came out, sadder and, it is to be hoped, wiser men.

Joint movements for the restriction of excessive overtime were instituted in Manchester and Rochdale, but they do not appear to have got even so far as the negotiating stage.

The general movement in Sheffield for a fifty-three-hour week came to a successful conclusion in April, 1906, a few non-federated firms offering opposition right up to the last moment.

During the year we had our first recognition as a Trade Union from the Admiralty, the occasion being that time-honoured grievance of shipwrights working at our trade in Chatham Dockyard, a practice our members had been protesting against for some twelve years. Very much to our surprise we were successful in this instance. Competent men who had been working at our trade for many years were to be transferred to the patternshop and rated as patternmakers,

and as soon as arrangements could be completed a promise was made that our trade should be recognised as a separate and independent unit in the dockyard. This concession brought to a complete and successful conclusion our complaints on this score in H.M. dockyards.

The ubiquitous joiner again turned up as an aspirant for patternmaking honours in Edinburgh and Rochdale. In the former case our members came out on strike; in the latter we settled by negotiation, in both cases the offending interlopers being relegated to their respective spheres. On the other hand, we had trouble in Peterborough owing to our members doing carpentering work, which the E.C. strongly disapproved of, and improved the occasion by obtaining a standard wage rate based on the highest wages in the shop in question, viz., 8½d. per hour.

Toward the close of the year we found ourselves faced with an attempt made to introduce the premium bonus system into certain establishments in Newark, Erith, and Leicester. At Erith a joint committee was formed to resist "any further attempts to foist this detestable system upon the workmen in this district." In the other two instances we took action by ourselves, as it was already in operation in the other departments. Our opposition was simple and effective: We simply instructed our members to refuse to work any system of payment by results, whatever the consequences.

At Portsmouth Dockyard we succeeded in raising our rates for established men from 40s. to 42s. 6d., and hired men from 42s. to 45s. per week. The Chatham arrangement regarding shipwrights working at our trade was also applied to Portsmouth.

Our year's work to obtain better conditions of employment for our members concluded by an authority to the Midland District Committee to withdraw our members from a shop in which labourers committed the heinous offence of varnishing patterns; this latter in accordance with a decision of the General Council.

The question of the admission of workmen engaged on metal patterns was again raised, and after seeking information with regard to the number of men engaged in this occupation and

the actual work they performed the E.C. decided to "adhere to our former policy and restrict our membership to pattern-makers possessing the tools and skill necessary to produce engineering patterns."

The question of joining the General Federation of Trades was voted upon, and by 822 to 707 votes it was decided to affiliate with that body, which we did on the highest scale, viz., entrance fee of 6d. per member on 90 per cent. of our total membership and contribution of 4d. per member per quarter; Dispute Benefit of 5s. per member per week for ten weeks, the continuance of this benefit to be subject to review by the Management Committee.

A General Council meeting was held, on the proposal of the E.C., during the last week in September, when the first definite and concrete proposal was made that we enter more fully into the principle of Labour representation on all elective bodies by running and financing candidates selected from our own membership, and as the Leeds delegate meeting had already attempted to incorporate in our rules a similar proposal, which had been turned down by the Registrar, provision was made that in the event of his further refusal to legalise the meeting of this expenditure from the funds of the society that steps be taken to impose a levy on the members for this purpose.

It was also decided to restrict overtime by a vote of the members, the North-East Coast arrangement of twelve hours in any one week, but not more than eighteen hours in four weeks to serve as a basis.

The Council decided to apply our liability in respect of the Workmen's Compensation Act and Employers' Liability Act, as laid down in Rule 1, to all "legal liability of the employers."

Advantage was taken of the presence of the president of the Patternmakers' League of North America to protest against the treatment to which our members were subjected in some cities in America—notably New York—and to impress upon our sister organisation the desirability of a recognition of the cards of either society. A curious sidelight was thrown upon this question when it was explained that the impost imposed upon all foreigners by the New York Association

was due to the action of our own members, or ex-members, in that city, who had been compelled to pay an excessive entrance fee to that organisation, and who were fully determined that their fellow countrymen should be subjected to the same treatment. This question is still in precisely the same position as it was sixteen years ago.

The principle of a National Conciliation Board with the employers, and which should provide for the settlement of all questions in dispute by arbitration, was recommended for adoption by the meeting.

Several pungent criticisms of the E.C., who were accused of altering, suppressing, or unfairly dealing with resolutions which did not altogether suit them, were dealt with, the tendency of the Council being to hit their absent brethren whenever they had the chance. This was particularly the case in respect of their treatment of a deficiency in the Treasurer's accounts, which the Council wiped off as a bad debt, and then dismissed the E.C. for their share in a transaction of which they had had absolutely no knowledge. Needless to say, the E.C. did not lie down to this castigation, and some very candid criticism of each other passed in confidential circulars to the members, which, whilst it cannot be altogether ignored in this veracious chronicle of events, is better ignored so far as detail is concerned, although all the correspondence is on file and open to the inspection of the curious.

The E.C. were enjoined to publish all interpretation of rules and precedents in the Annual Report, and that a vote be taken as to holding a Council meeting each year to revise these instruments.

The Council reversed a decision of the E.C. refusing Contingent Benefit to members who struck work in order to retain sandpapering, varnishing, and painting of patterns. They declined, however, to arbitrarily adopt a by-law limiting apprentices in a proportion of two lads to five journeymen.

Resolutions dealing with the maintenance of shop rate over the district rate of wages were adopted, the policy of the E.C. in respect of these matters being generally approved; but the latter body were recommended to be more liberal in their interpretation of the rule regarding the vexed question of Victimisation Benefit. It was also agreed to recommend

to the members the appointment of a professional accountant to audit our Yearly Report.

It was decided to take a vote as to supporting the Ruskin College movement, as also the propriety of appointing another permanent official, who should act either as a Scottish Organiser or be attached to the General Office. The voting upon the questions submitted by the General Council to the members resulted in an overwhelming vote in favour of a system of national conciliation—as yet to come—and the auditing of our yearly accounts by a professional accountant.

The question of running a candidate for Parliament under the Labour ticket was carried by 768 to 663 votes. In view of the narrow majority the E.C. decided to retake the vote, along with such other votes as were authorised by the General Council. The second vote on Labour representation in Parliament was fully confirmatory of the first vote, 1,073 voting for, and 603 against. This principle was extended to members of our society who were aspirants for positions upon any local governing body.

It may be as well at this point to break the chronological narration of events in connection with our adoption of the principle of Parliamentary representation and give a brief *resumé* of the application of this principle as a connected narrative. The E.C. invited nominations for the position of Parliamentary candidates. Four names were submitted to the vote, and ultimately Bro. J. Pointer, Sheffield Branch, was elected and his name sent to the Labour Party as our official candidate. This was in December, 1907. Our rules, as altered by the Leeds delegate meeting in 1904, had contained in our objects a provision for our support of Labour representation, and a consequential rule providing for the establishment of a fund for this purpose by the appropriation of 1s. per member per year from our General Funds. The Registrar objected to the "object" reference in Rule 1, but registered the rule relating to the establishment of a Parliamentary Fund. This inconsistency was pointed out to him, and after considerable negotiating and interviewing the latter rule was struck out and the rules as amended issued to the members. When we definitely adopted the principle of Parliamentary representation we again approached him and

asked that the first registration of our rules should supersede those registered one month afterwards. After incredible difficulty this was assented to and our "consequential rule" reinstated.

It was expected that our difficulties regarding the establishment of a Parliamentary Fund were ended, and in this belief our candidate, with the assent of the E.C., accepted the position of Labour candidate for his native constituency of Attercliffe. The case of Osborne, of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, however, seemed likely to wreck his candidature for this or any other constituency, the highest judicial tribunal, the Court of Appeal, having decided that it was illegal for a Trade Union to levy their members or use the funds of the union for the purpose of promoting Labour representation in Parliament or on municipal bodies. This decision seemed to render nugatory all our efforts to further the cause of Labour representation, and the E.C. fully stated the position in December, 1908, adding an expression of their opinion that it was quite useless to attempt to raise a fund which would be in any sense adequate by voluntary subscription. Four months afterwards a succession of fortuitous circumstances, probably unparalleled in political history, appeared to give our candidate a more than sporting chance of successfully contesting Attercliffe. The Conservatives had two candidates, neither of whom would give way. The Liberals had at that time no candidate at all. Bro. Pointer had been recently returned for that division to the Town Council, and the E.C. decided to make themselves responsible for the expenses of the contest, and instituted a whirlwind campaign amongst our members and other bodies favourable to Labour representation for the necessary sinews of war, the Sheffield Trades and Labour Council guaranteeing £100. The Liberals put an official candidate in the field at the last moment, and the result was that our candidate was returned at the bye-election of April, 1909, by the narrow majority of 151 votes. The total Unionist vote, divided between two candidates, was 6,183; Labour, 3,531; Liberal, 3,175. It may be noted that Bro. Pointer represented Attercliffe for five years, during which he fought two other elections in January and December of 1910, and his untimely death in 1914 terminated a career which was full of promise not only to himself personally,

but to the cause he so ably espoused and to the organisation whose aid made it possible for him to attain the position of representing the Labour cause in Parliament.

It may also be noted that the anticipations of the E.C. in regard to a voluntary levy were abundantly fulfilled. The glamour of the first Attercliffe election evoked a splendid response to our voluntary Parliamentary Fund, but the enthusiasm gradually died away, and we were left with a deficiency which figured in our yearly balance sheets without diminution for many years, until, in fact, an alteration of the law wiped out the effects of the Osborne case, and the collection of funds for Parliamentary representation—due consideration being given to conscientious objectors—through the agency of Trade Unions was legalised.

Reverting back to the events arising from the General Council meeting of 1906, further votes were taken upon the question of restricting overtime, which was carried by 1,646 to 178 votes, which, however, eventually became nothing more than the expression of a pious opinion.

It was also decided to support Ruskin Hall, the effect of which was that the society agreed to pay the contributions and levies of any member who went to that institution for a year's tuition.

The appointment of another permanent official was approved by 1,227 to 476 votes, and a subsequent vote declared that he should be attached to General Office and not be earmarked as a Scottish Organiser. This seemed decisive enough in all conscience, but considerable hostility to the proposal was expressed after the vote was taken, and ultimately the E.C. not only invited expressions of opinion from the branches, but entered the lists themselves and roundly denounced the whole scheme, which, after all, was not only reasonable, but was imperatively necessary. They had no axe to grind, and they knew more of the work and requirements at Headquarters than did a body elected from outlying districts, who were entirely dependent upon our printed reports for any knowledge they possessed of the work at the General Office. The invitation of the branches was responded to by only twelve out of eighty-five branches, and as it was quite evident that the members at large were

indifferent to the whole question, the E.C. intimated that it must stand over until it could be legally dealt with at the next revision of rules, a decision which was received without a single protest from the members.

Our activities during the year 1906 may be briefly summarised as follows: The material advantages we obtained in regard to wages were an average increase from £1 17s. 7d. per member to £1 18s. 1½d.—6½d. per member per week is not much of an advance, it is true, but small advances at long intervals were the rule in these times, and forty of our branches, representing one-half of our members, received concessions in respect of wages during the year. These advantages were gained without a resort to hostilities, except in two districts, one in which we were involved owing to a general movement, whilst the other was confined to our own organisation.

We added four branches to our number during the year, raising our total to eighty-five in all. Our admission of members constituted a record, 740 new entrants being recorded, of whom twenty-five were Trade Protection members. Our exclusions numbered 171; our gain in membership being 462, which gave us a total of 6,513 members at the end of the year.

The year's income from all sources amounted to £20,906, or £3 4s. 0½d. per member. Expenditure reached £13,490, or £2 1s. 4d. per member, giving us a gain for the year of £7,416, and a total balance at the end of the year of £57,334, or £8 15s. 8½d. per member. The details of our expenditure do not call for special comment. Trade Benefit was moderate, amounting to £5,113, or 15s. 8½d. per member, whilst our other items of expenditure were about the normal.

Altogether 1906 was a year of strenuous endeavour. We may have exercised more force than discretion; still it is difficult to imagine at this interval how we could have exercised more energy in the internal administration and material betterment of our membership at large than was done during this memorable and busy year.

1907.

At the beginning of the year trade was by no means good, and the prospects for the ensuing twelve months were anything

but conducive to a continuation of our activities of 1906. The depression in trade was in the nature of a creeping paralysis, which reached its zenith during the last month of the year, when 790 of our members were signing the vacant book. At the beginning of the year, however, our number of unemployed members was 299, our average per month over the year being 504, whilst our percentage was 7.5—twice as many as were recorded during the previous year. Our aggressive wages movements were accordingly limited to the first six months, when conditions were certainly not favourable, but were not actually prohibitive to successful efforts to improve workshop conditions.

At Warrington a joint wages movement succeeded in obtaining 1s. advance and a second 1s. four weeks afterwards, with corresponding increases in piece prices, provided the second 1s. was conceded in Manchester. It was also agreed that in future wages should rise and fall with Manchester.

At Grantham we succeeded in levelling our rates up from 34s. and 35s. to a minimum rate of 36s. per week. We also obtained a reasonable allowance of time for grinding tools where men were paid off.

At Birmingham a peculiar position existed, the associated employers, numbering fifteen, whilst their non-associated confreres ran to 260 separate firms. So those entrusted with the conduct of a joint wages movement tackled the larger body as individual units and left the organised employers severely alone. The largest firm in the district, however, joined the organisation, and the joint committee promptly switched on to that body and demanded a central joint conference, when it was agreed to recommend the acceptance of 1s. per week advance, to date from the first full pay in April, which was duly accepted by the workmen; and the host of small unorganised employers were dealt with by withdrawing all men who did not get the advance by the end of July.

We were not so fortunate at Wolverhampton, where we attempted to induce the employers to recognise a minimum rate of 36s. per week. We established the rate without their formal concurrence, but intimated that young members starting in the district would not be expected to obtain that rate.

At this time there seemed a disposition amongst the employers to insist upon national settlements instead of local adjustments. In accordance with an undertaking, the Manchester employers met their workmen's representatives in February to consider the question of 1s. further advance, when an intimation was given that if the matter was not settled it would be transferred to a Central Conference in London. The employers themselves declined to settle by refusing the 1s. advance, which formed the sole subject of discussion. The application was then brought before a Central Conference in London and at once agreed to, it being quite evident that the local employers were quite willing to grant in London what they had refused in Manchester.

We obtained an advance of 1s. in Donnington, with the promise of a further similar sum if trade kept good. We failed to persuade the firms concerned that the second advance was justified. At Coatbridge we succeeded in obtaining an advance, after our members commenced to pack their tools, interviewing every firm in the district in vain.

At Derby a joint movement succeeded in obtaining an advance of 1s. the first pay in August and a further 1s. the first pay in January; this at a conference held in May. The intervals probably constitute a record.

At Coventry we had much the same difficulty as we experienced at Coatbridge, owing to the disorganisation of the employers. We sought to fix a minimum rate of 10d. per hour, and had to prefer our request to every individual employer in the town. The master patternmakers, contrary to the present custom, paid less wages than the engineering and motor works, and a 10d. rate meant an advance of 4s. 4d. per week. It took us six months to deal with the position, and we ultimately established our rate without having to resort to a strike. It is interesting to note that a census of our trade in Coventry at that period shows seventy-three U.P., eight A.S.E., seven S.E.M., four non-society, and thirty-two youths.

We had our most important strike of the year at Sheffield, where we applied for a 2s. advance. This was granted by a non-associated firm employing about one-half of our members. The Employers' Federation offered one-half that amount,

and the fact of our partial success was no doubt the chief cause of our local members' rejection of the offer of the lesser amount. It was an absolutely hopeless quest from the first, as we did not succeed in involving the other unions concerned in the dispute, and left fifty-five A.S.E., eight S.E.M., and eight non-society men at work. The strike dragged on until the beginning of August, when an advance of 1s., which had been previously accepted by the engineers, was offered, together with a promise that six months after acceptance the question of a further 1s. advance, without prejudice, would be considered. This latter "concession" meant nothing, because we could always make such an application. But it undoubtedly sugar-coated the pill which circumstances compelled us to swallow. These terms were accepted by a ballot vote, 76 voting for, and 18 against acceptance. It was a miserable wind-up to an ill-conceived and hopeless strike, as only forty-one of our members were restarted, leaving sixty on the streets, and the E.C. had to place an embargo on any member accepting work until the ex-strikers had been reinstated.

We were much more successful in Barnsley, which is usually governed from Sheffield, and where we obtained 1s. advance the latter part of April, with a further similar advance three months afterwards. At Dundee we succeeded in raising our minimum rate to 35s. This covered Arbroath, Monifieth, and Carnoustie. We had considerable trouble with some of the small firms in the latter towns, but ultimately got them into line, with one or two exceptions.

An application to the Liverpool and Birkenhead employers for an advance of 1s. was successful, although it took some time and a considerable amount of patience to round up some of the minor non-associated firms.

A long-standing grievance on the Clyde had been that Johnstone was rated $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per hour less than the district standard. An attempt to remedy this difference was made, when an application for an all-round advance of $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per hour, with double that amount for Johnstone, was made to the Clyde employers. After the usual negotiations and conference an offer of $\frac{1}{4}$ d. advance to Johnstone was accepted. At the end of the year a notice of an all-round reduction of $\frac{1}{4}$ d.



ARTHUR PEARSON,
Leeds,
E.C. President, 1903-1909.

per hour was made, which it was proposed to resist by means of the formation of a joint committee of all the trades concerned.

At Leicester we combined with the other engineering trades in an application which ultimately secured an advance of 1s. per week, making the rate for our trade 38s. A protracted joint wages movement took place in Ashton, where the employers were asked to pay the second instalment of a 2s. advance applied for the previous December. It was asked that this concession be granted the second week in July, but owing to a squabble between the A.S.E. and the Oldham employers the matter was hung up, and ultimately the Manchester terms of 1s. advance the first pay in January was conceded.

A joint movement in Leeds for an advance of 1s. per week had a rather remarkable sequel. A local conference was asked for, but the employers refused unless the whole of the societies outside the '98 terms of settlement were prepared to sign an agreement containing the Provisions for Avoiding Disputes. This they refused to do, with the result that the non-signatory societies were represented at the abortive local conference as a matter of grace and were not allowed to attend at the Central Conference, where the employers, having succeeded in dividing their adversaries, gave a point blank refusal to the joint application, and the movement was allowed to lapse.

At Belfast we had a five weeks' strike. Our application was for 1s. per week advance, and we secured the co-operation of the A.S.E. No offer was obtainable, although we pointed out that we had received no general advance of wages in Belfast for nine years. We struck work on October 26th, twelve A.S.E. members accompanying our members on to the streets. Communications were opened up with the chief firm, which was unconnected with the federated employers, and we succeeded in obtaining our 1s., payable the first pay in March, 1908, which terms were eventually agreed to by the associated employers.

Toward the end of the year trade was very bad, and the North-East Coast employers followed the lead of their fellows on the Clyde by making a demand for a reduction of 2s. per week on time workers' wages, with corresponding reductions on those of pieceworkers. The position of the trade

at this time was hopeless. In addition to bad trade—we had 790 members on the books, just under 12 per cent. of our membership—the societies signatory to the '98 terms of settlement were not in a position to co-operate with the non-signatory societies. The Moulders and our society were members of separate Conciliation Boards, and the other societies connected with the engineering trades were not in a position to render any effective aid in preventing a wages reduction. The terms agreed to were 1s. reduction off time rates of 26s. and over and 6d. per week on rates of 22s. and less than 26s., with 2½ per cent. off piece rates, to date from first full pay in February, 1908. These terms, with the exception of the 6d. reduction, were accepted by our members.

The most important of our various movement other than wages was at Newark, where the local Employers' Association intimated their intention to introduce the premium bonus system into our trade. We did make a trial of it, but objected to the "arbitrary and discriminating manner in which the system was worked," and by 15 to 2 votes our members decided to end it, which they attempted to do by coming out on strike. It was another example of tilting at windmills, as in one shop seven of our members and one non-society man came out, leaving three A.S.E. and fifteen non-society men at work, whilst in the other shop concerned eight of our members and one non-society man came out, leaving two A.S.E. members in the shop. The firms had little difficulty in filling up the vacancies, and after the strike had dragged on from April until August the E.C. closed not only the strike but the branch.

At Birmingham we asserted our rights to varnish our own patterns by withdrawing our members from a shop where a labourer was employed on this delectable occupation.

We were threatened with the introduction of the premium bonus system at Belfast and at the largest shop in Erith. In both cases our members were instructed to restrict its introduction by any and every means in their power. In one shop in London three of our members were discharged for refusing to work under this system.

Dundee, where a general movement for a fifty-three-hour week had been in existence for some time, abandoned their

application and substituted a demand for a 12 o'clock Saturday, which had been granted to the building trade. A further attempt in June, 1913, was more successful, when the workmen adopted the unique policy of stopping work at mid-day on Saturday, and returned at 1 p.m. for their wages. After six weeks the local Employers' Federation gave way and granted the fifty-three hours and 12 o'clock Saturday to the engineering and shipbuilding trades, to date from 23rd August, 1913, the men forfeiting one hour's wages.

St. Helens were more successful, a joint movement succeeding in obtaining this concession. At Bradford we tackled the question of the undue proportion of apprentices to journeymen by a personal visit to the offending firms. At Manchester we objected to the employment of a pattern carrier at turning for our trade, and were referred to the local Employers' Federation. Kilmarnock completed their movement for weekly pays, the local employers agreeing to give this system a six months' trial.

We added two branches to our roll and closed one—Newark—which left us with eighty-six branches at the end of the year.

Our total income from all sources amounted to £21,001, or £3 1s. 4½d. per member. Expenditure reached the high figure of £21,745, or £3 3s. 6½d. per member. We had, thus, the unusual experience of sustaining a loss over the year's operations, which, however, was represented by the comparatively insignificant sum of £744, which left us with the still substantial balance of £56,590, or £8 5s. 5d. per member. All our chief heads of expenditure showed a considerable increase, by far the largest being in respect of Unemployment Benefit, which ran into five figures and amounted to £10,419, about twice the sum we expended for this benefit during the previous year. Sick and management also showed increases, our sick costing £500 and management £380 more than during the year previous.

Against these aggregate sums account must be taken of our increase in membership, which amounted to 329. Our total admissions numbered 638, twenty being Trade Protection members, and we excluded 216, giving a total membership at the end of the year of 6,842. Under the circumstances,

and particularly in view of the depressed condition of trade during the greater part of the year, our progress with regard to wages was fairly satisfactory, the average rate being increased by 7d. per member per week, and the general average paid throughout the society reaching £1 18s. 8½d. per member.

1908.

The year under review stands out as being by far the worst, so far as unemployment was concerned, in our history, even if we extend that period to the time of writing this record. Trade was depressed enough in 1907, but no one anticipated that it would get infinitely worse as the year went on and that an idle roll of 676 in January would swell to 1,538 in October, the latter figure representing 22 per cent. of our membership. Our average number out of work per month was 1,247, with a percentage of 18; and our record of unemployed members exceeded four figures during nine months of the year. We had nothing to compare with these figures in our previous records, our highest percentage of out of work members from involuntary causes being 11.5 in 1879. The area of unemployment covered every individual centre in the United Kingdom, and men were out of work who had never suffered from such an experience in their lives and who certainly never expected anything of the kind to happen to them.

Under these circumstances it was scarcely possible to undertake any movement for improved conditions, and, as might be expected, any attempts in this direction were few and far between, and such districts as managed to maintain their industrial position might well be accounted fortunate.

The demand on the part of the Clyde employers for a reduction of ¼d. per hour resulted in our acceptance of the inevitable, a slight concession, which was granted to every other accepting trade, being the postponement of the reduction for two weeks. The resistance to this demand was badly managed. An attempt was made to form a joint committee with a view to united action. The employers refused to meet such a body unless they came armed with plenary powers to settle; and whilst this point was still unsettled the Boiler-makers and A.S.E. scuttled the united action campaign by

applying for separate conferences. The whole affair then became a scramble as to who should effect the first and most favourable settlement. In the end all fared alike, with the exception of four small trades, who came out on strike. This settlement applied to Barrow, and the North-East Coast terms eventually applied to Hull.

It should be counted to us for righteousness that at Butterley, where the A.S.E. and S.E.M. struck for an advance of wages, and where we had one member who was never consulted and who consequently remained at work, that we withdrew our representative after considerable correspondence with our allies.

Our Swansea and Llanelly Branches made an attempt to increase their wages, but the conditions were much too bad to justify the E.C. in authorising any move which might add to the number of members drawing benefit.

A joint conference was held at Nottingham to consider improved conditions, chief of which was an advance of wages. Needless to say, the hopelessness of such a quest was realised after the first interview with the employers. A few minor concessions regarding overtime and night-shift were granted. An attempt was made by the employers to obtain the signatures of the workmen's representatives to an agreement which would have given them authority to call upon any of their employés to work piecework. This gave us an opportunity for a declaration of our principle regarding this question, which, needless to say, we took the fullest advantage of. Our special grievance, however, was the inadequate allowance for grinding time, which was one hour, instead of the two we claimed.

Considerable friction arose with a firm in Birmingham, where the forty-eight hours were worked, and who wished to adopt the local fifty-three-hour week. Ultimately a compromise was effected, by which the hours were fixed at fifty, with a 12 o'clock Saturday.

Toward the end of the year the Manchester employers intimated their intention to reduce wages by 2s. per week, Wigan and Rochdale following suit; whilst a demand was made by the Preston employers for a reduction of one-half that amount.

An attempt to restrict overtime to six hours per week was made by our Clyde members. The employers refused to entertain this proposal, and we then modified our demand to the North-East Coast restriction of eight hours in one week and eighteen in one month. We were offered the engineers' terms of ten hours per week and thirty-two in one month. We eventually entered into an agreement on the latter basis of a four weeks' restriction, but there were so many exceptions that the agreement was practically valueless.

The Bradford employers sought to introduce the one-break system on a fifty-two or fifty-three hours basis, which the joint trades refused to accept unless accompanied by a substantial reduction in the working hours per week.

Our industrial activities for the year were very meagre and were chiefly confined to tactics of a defensive character, and considering the terrible depression in trade we experienced during the whole year, the wonder is that we were not subjected to greater and more general reductions than was actually the case. The actual reductions in wages were enforced chiefly in marine engineering centres. They affected twenty-one of our branches and 2,569 members, or 36 per cent. of our aggregate membership. The average reduction amounted to 8½d. per member per week, making our wage rate £1 18s. One thing for which we might well have given thanks was that we had no trouble in connection with the introduction of outsiders into our trade.

The general and lengthy depression in trade was the cause of very strong representations being made from the Clyde and North-East Coast for the payment of benefits which were not justified by rule, which demand has been put forward since 1908 with more success than was the case during that period. It was urged that a partial strike on the Clyde and a strike of engineers on the North-East Coast against reductions to which we had agreed constituted a lock-out, and that our members were unemployed owing to that circumstance and not to any condition of trade. Even if this was the case no claim for Contingent Benefit was admissible; but that did not prevent insistent claims being made from both districts for extra benefits altogether outside our rules. The E.C. had

to take a strong stand against these claims, and had to point out that any additional aid to our unemployed members must be of a purely voluntary character. It is to the credit of some of our Clyde branches that they levied themselves for the support of the worst cases amongst their unemployed members, but as this support was voluntary we have no record of how long the levy lasted, the amount raised, and the manner of its distribution.

We did not allow bad trade to interfere with our organising activities, although we did not open any new branches during the year, their number standing at eighty-six. Our increase in membership, however, was quite satisfactory, considering the depressing influences of bad trade. Our admissions numbered 486, four being Trade Protection members. This number was well below our usual average. Exclusions were more numerous than we were accustomed to, numbering 262; our gain for the year being 155, which gave us a total membership at the end of the year of 6,997.

Financially the year was the most disastrous in our history. Our income amounted to £20,301, or £2 18s. per member. This was rather less per member than the amount paid for several previous years, and was due to the large number of our members who were exempt from paying contributions owing to unemployment. Expenditure reached the enormous total of £34,331, or £4 18s. 2d. per member, far and away the highest aggregate and proportionate expenditure in our history. Our loss over the year's transactions amounted to £14,030, which left us with the still substantial balance of £42,560, or £6 1s. 8d. per member. Our chief expenditure was under the heading of "Trade Fund" and amounted to £24,614, or £3 10s. 4½d. per member—21s. per member more than in the black year of 1879. As might be expected, Sick Benefit considerably exceeded the normal expenditure and exceeded the previous year's expenditure by £720, or 1s. 9d. per member.

Altogether it was little wonder that we dropped the curtain on 1908 with feelings of relief. With lowered wages and a depleted exchequer we had nothing to look back upon. We felt, however, that conditions were so bad they could not be worse, and that any change must be in the direction of improvement.

1909.

This year opened under the most depressing circumstances. There was no rift in the cloud of depression which had hung over the engineering and shipbuilding industry for the greater part of two years. During the first month we had 1,315 men on the books, only three of our smallest branches having clear vacant books. This condition applied in a somewhat lesser degree throughout the whole year, although on a slowly diminishing scale, until in December our unemployed members had sunk to 671. The average per month throughout the year amounted to 999, and our percentage stood at 14.2 per month. This was an improvement on the previous year's record of 3.8 per cent. But apart from 1908, the percentage was the highest in our history, even including the year of the Clyde strike.

Under these circumstances it is scarcely to be wondered that the reductions of wages which had commenced in 1908 were continued during the year under review, and the activities of the unions representing the engineering and shipbuilding trades were concentrated on purely defensive tactics.

The Mid-Lancashire Employers' Federation were the first to move, their demand being for a reduction of 2s. per week. The difficulty was to know exactly what towns were covered by this geographical term. It was only when our first local conference was held that we learnt that Preston, Bolton, and Bury were outside this combination. We were faced not only with difficulties concerning area, but with differences in the amount of the employers' demand. St. Helens, which was represented on the Federation, asked 1s. reduction, which also was the amount claimed by Preston, Bolton, and Bury.

At the conference between the employers and ourselves the former body demanded the Manchester settlement of an immediate 1s. and a further conference four months hence to consider a reduction of a similar amount. As the employers refused our request for the Manchester rate of wages, our members declined to accept their proposals, and a strike appeared imminent. However, as the result of further negotiations the employers agreed to waive the latter part of their proposal, and although our members voted against their amended proposal, the majority was insufficient to

justify a strike. At a separate conference these terms had already been offered and accepted by our Bolton and Bury Branches.

The Manchester reduction was dealt with by a joint committee representing the whole of the engineering trades, and the settlement already indicated was carried by 4,412 to 2,554 votes. This movement was beset with difficulties, arising chiefly from the fact that certain trades were outside the 1898 engineers' agreement. It appeared that the A.S.E., without the knowledge of their fellow signatory societies, had intimated to the Employers' Federation that they would not attend any Central Conference which included the non-signatory trades. They were perfectly justified in this policy, as the latter bodies, being free agents, had all the advantages and none of the responsibilities of the organisations bound by the agreement. As it was understood that in the event of a failure to settle the Manchester reduction in that district recourse would be had to a Central Conference, from which the non-signatory societies would be excluded, the latter organisations made every effort to settle locally, and, as has been indicated, succeeded in their object.

A further difficulty arose in respect of Ashton, one-half of the employers being in the Manchester Federation and the remainder in Oldham. However, the Ashton members of the Manchester Federation met the representatives of their workmen and agreed to eliminate from the terms already agreed to the proviso for a further meeting in four months to consider the second reduction of 1s. per week. A similar conference was held with the Oldham contingent of employers, when the same terms were offered and subsequently refused by the men. Our position was a curious one, as we were acting with the joint trades in Ashton and on our own in Oldham. However, as our members in the latter town decided against acceptance, we were in line with the other trades. Ultimately the demand of the employers was modified to 1s. reduction, to operate from May 15th, with no further question of a reduction for twelve months.

This settlement also applied to Stockport. We had also considerable difficulty with Earlstown, where the two firms had left the St. Helens Federation and joined Manchester. They made the usual demand, which was rejected on the

ground that they did not pay Manchester rates, and were offered the alternative of taking their demand to a Central Conference.

A firm in Lillishall had a way of their own in enforcing a reduction in their patternmakers' wages. They shut the shop up and offered to reopen it at a reduction of 2s. per week on former rates, an offer which we declined to entertain.

Considerable originality was shown by the Sheffield employers, who suggested an informal reduction of 1s. per week, without any of the pomp and circumstance of protracted negotiations, conferences, or the usual concomitants of an orthodox wages movement. The workmen, however, would have none of it. If their wages were to be reduced it would have to be with the usual accompaniments. We were put into the background, whilst the societies signatory to the engineers' 1897 agreement went through the routine of local and Central Conferences, with the result that an agreement was made for the withdrawal of the proposed reduction; no change to take place for five years. We were then accorded a conference and these terms submitted to us, and eventually, on a ballot vote, in which 157 voted in favour, and 45 against, we accepted the inevitable and ensured peace in Sheffield for five years. These terms also applied to Barnsley.

We had a further curious experience at Carlisle, where we had agreed that wages should rise and fall with Newcastle. The last reduction of 1s., agreed to by the North-East Coast Conciliation Board was not, however, enforced by the Carlisle employers, and they evened up matters by asking their workmen not to ask for the next advance granted in Newcastle, provided it did not exceed 1s., and this was agreed to.

At Birkenhead we suffered 1s. reduction and obtained an assurance from the dominant shipbuilding firm there that no credence need be attached to a rumour that the making of hawse pipe patterns was to revert to carpenters.

At Bradford the joint trades agreed to a reduction of 1s. per week. At Birmingham the signatory societies succeeded in having a threatened reduction postponed for six months. As a non-signatory society we played the part of interested spectators.

Our Coventry members were subjected to the biggest reductions known in our trade. The employers had not previously been federated, and we dealt with each firm separately and successfully, and had, in June, 1907, obtained an advance of 1d. per hour. An association was formed early in 1909, which celebrated its institution by demanding the restitution of the 1d. advance we had obtained eighteen months before. This was not done in the orthodox manner, but through the foreman in each shop. We protested against this haphazard procedure and unsuccessfully requested a conference. The whole matter was then submitted to a meeting of the trade, the A.S.E. and S.E.M. local officials being present, when a ballot vote resulted in 55 being in favour, and thirty-eight opposed to a strike. As the necessary two-thirds majority had not been obtained the E.C. declined to sanction a turn-out.

At the end of the year, however, the newly-formed association had got into harness, and they accorded a conference to the joint trades on local working rules. Our modest request was that there should be embodied in these rules a proviso that patternmakers should be allowed to varnish their own patterns, and should not be called upon to work piecework. Both requests were refused, and the representative of our interests had to content himself with an intimation of what would happen if either of these fundamental principles were violated.

We obtained an infinitesimal concession at Kilmarnock, when it was agreed that our members in receipt of 28s. per week and under should be exempted from a reduction of 1s. enforced against those in receipt of a higher wage rate. At Dundee we were blanketed by the big battalions, who, in Central Conference, agreed to 1s. reduction. We perforce had to accept these terms. We made an unsuccessful attempt to have Arbroath excepted, as they had a lesser rate, of that amount. At Halifax a general reduction of 1s. was enforced, our trade being excepted on the quite sufficient ground that we did not obtain the last advance of that amount accorded to the engineers. Hull, which formerly followed the North-East Coast, decided for the nonce to couple up with Sheffield; and the employers withdrew a demand for 1s. reduction on condition that wages were allowed to remain at the then rate of 39s. for a period of five years, these terms being

accepted by our members, in common with the other societies representing the engineering trade. Aberdeen employers imposed the usual 1s. reduction on our members in April, promising to raise our wages when an advance was granted by the Clyde employers.

Movements other than wages included a dispute with the Bradford Employers' Federation regarding their introduction of the one-break system. It appeared that fifty-four federated firms were working this system with a varying number of hours constituting a week's work; and that 212 firms in all were working under one break. It was also stated that a conference of the signatory societies to the 1898 agreement had agreed to a one-break system on a fifty-one-hour week, which, however, was subsequently repudiated by the members concerned. The matter was never satisfactorily settled, and quite a number of strikes took place, usually with unsuccessful results.

At Barrow the employers, by shock tactics, succeeded in introducing the premium bonus system into their pattern-shops. Every other trade except the moulders and ourselves were working under this system, the apprentice patternmakers being included in the general policy of the firm. The moulders were first tackled and offered no effective resistance to being included. Our trade were then the only time workers, and they were dealt with in sections, some twenty-eight of them being called to the foreman's office and a demand made that within the hour they sign a three years' agreement to work the premium bonus system. They did so, and the remainder of their shopmates were discharged, and such as were restarted were employed under the new system, but were not asked to sign any agreement, so as to render their immediate discharge easier. The upshot of this miserable fiasco was that the E.C. fined each of the twenty-eight offending members £2 for signing the agreement, and there the matter ended; and the system has continued in Barrow since that time. It is a point well worth noting that discreet and confidential inquiries have been made as to its working from time to time, and in no case has there been any expressed objection to its continuance, and it is questionable if any of our members in that shop would relinquish his job if called upon to do so by the society.

The same firm were not quite so fortunate at their Erith works, where one-half of their patternmakers were put on bonus, following the attitude of passive resistance assumed by the boilermakers and other objecting trades. We refused to accept the extra payment, a note of which was given each week, with an intimation that the accumulated amount could be had on application to the office. We succeeded in obtaining an interview with the London Employers' Federation, when they agreed that the system should be left in abeyance for six months, without prejudice, and that a further talk be arranged when asked for by either party.

An attempt to introduce the one-break system on a fifty-one and a-half-hour week by a firm in Donnington was withdrawn as the result of joint action by the societies concerned.

Administratively the most important event of the year was the transfer of the seat of government from Leeds to Manchester. Our Headquarters had been situated in the former centre for two terms of three years, which was the maximum period recognised by our society up to that date for the retention of the seat of government by any centre. The final vote was: Manchester, 1,714; Newcastle, 1,150.

Our average rate of wages only dropped 1d. per member per week during the year, at the end of which our rate stood at £1 17s. 11d. per week. There is no recorded instance of any advance having been granted or even asked for, and the defensive measures taken by the trade were about equally divided between joint and sectional movements. Invariably the result was the same, and there is no case known of any trade—including our own—obtaining any advantage because it conducted separate negotiations with the employers. Another point worth noting is, that in no case was a reference made to Central Conference. Both employers and workmen appeared to be of one mind in effecting local settlements.

One branch was added to our number, no new ground being broken, raising the total of our branches to eighty-seven. Our gain in membership constituted a record, only twenty-five being added to our roll throughout the year. This is a poor enough result of twelve months of organising effort, but the times were not conducive to numerical development, and we appeared to stand alone amongst contemporary unions in

being able to record any progress whatever in membership. Our total admissions numbered 474, and we excluded 341; the heavy contributions and the impossibility of a member out of compliance with the rules rehabilitating himself being responsible for the abnormal number of lapses. Our total membership at the close of the year was 7,022.

Financially we continued on the down grade which we had followed during 1908. Our income from all sources amounted to £21,481, or £3 1s. 2d. per member. This was by no means a record, the amount per member having been exceeded on several occasions; but it is exceedingly improbable that the payment of that average sum ever entailed such sacrifice and even privation upon our general membership as was the case during that year. Two and a-half years' acute depression in trade had left its mark upon at least one-half of our membership, and the wonder is that so many remained true to their principles under such untoward circumstances as had been experienced for so long a period. Our expenditure during the year amounted to £29,263, or £4 3s 4d. per member, rather less than 15s. per member than was expended during the previous year, but standing next to that year as the period during which we spent most money under circumstances beyond our control. Our loss for the year amounted to £7,782, which left us with a balance in hand of £34,777, or £4 19s. 0½d. per member, the lowest for eleven years.

As will be readily conjectured, our chief item of expenditure was on account of Unemployment Benefit, no less than £19,372, or £2 15s. 2d. per member having been expended on these purposes. This was £5,300, or 15s. 2d. per member less than we spent during 1908, and with that year's expenditure easily eclipsed all previous payments in connection with bad trade in our history. Other heads of expenditure do not call for special comment. Sick Benefit showed a reduction of £270 over the previous year's figures, and Superannuation reached four figures, and cost some £240 more than we paid to our age-worn members the previous year.

Altogether a year we prefer to look back upon as reaching the low-water mark of our Trade Union activities and financial results, and one in which the sacrifices made by our members will, we hope, never again have to be repeated.

1910.

A considerable improvement in trade took place during this year, although this description can only be considered as a relative term, as we certainly could not describe the general condition of trade during 1910 as being anything other than dull. Our average number of men on the books was 390, and the best monthly return we had was in July, when 241 members were out of work. The percentage was 5.5, which certainly did not indicate any great degree of prosperity in the engineering and ancillary trades.

There was, however, a considerable improvement in the conditions to which we had been subjected during the three years previous, and it was only natural that attempts should be made to regain some of the reductions in wages which had been enforced against us.

As was generally the case, we sometimes fought for our own hand and sometimes collaborated with other trades. At Nottingham a joint movement was instituted in February to obtain an advance of 2s. per week. In November a firm offer was made by the employers in Central Conference of 1s. advance provided the unemployed in the district did not exceed 11.6 per cent. on 11th February, 1911; the then percentage was 1.6. This was accepted by a ballot vote of the men concerned. In April we asked the same employers for an advance to our Grantham members, and in June fixed up for an advance of 1s. per week to be granted during the ensuing four months. We also received satisfactory assurances regarding the probationary period that young journeymen had to serve before getting full money, the firm agreeing that such period should not exceed two years.

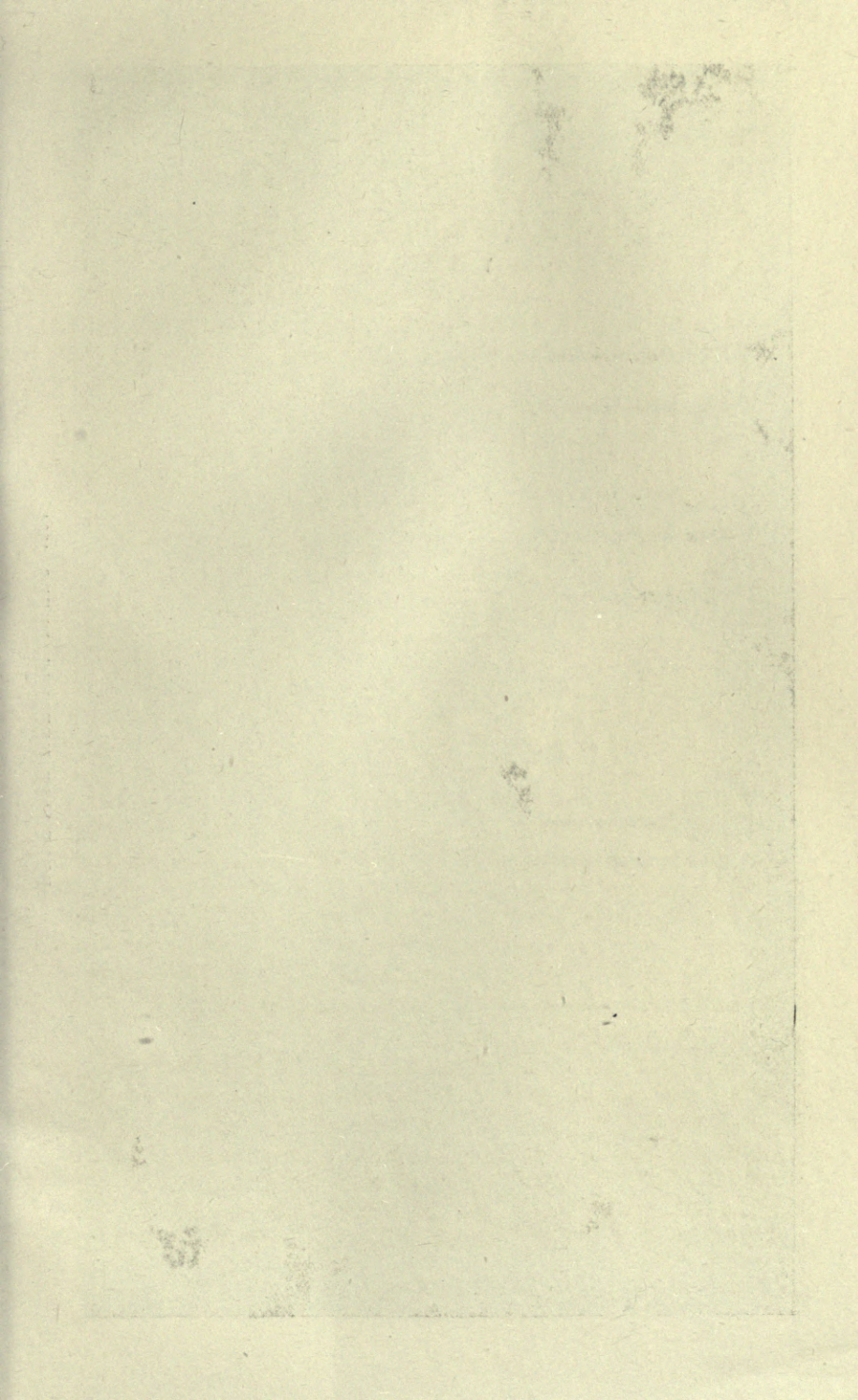
The Bolton and Bury employers gave notices for a reduction of wages, which they subsequently amended by a proposal to stabilise wages for a fixed term of years. They also intimated their intention of taking the matter to a Central Conference. We strongly opposed the latter course, as we found that in all joint movements we were being completely shut out from all but the preliminary and comparatively unimportant negotiations, and, needless to say, the whole of the trades were strongly opposed to any agreement which did not provide for a restitution of the reduction which had been enforced

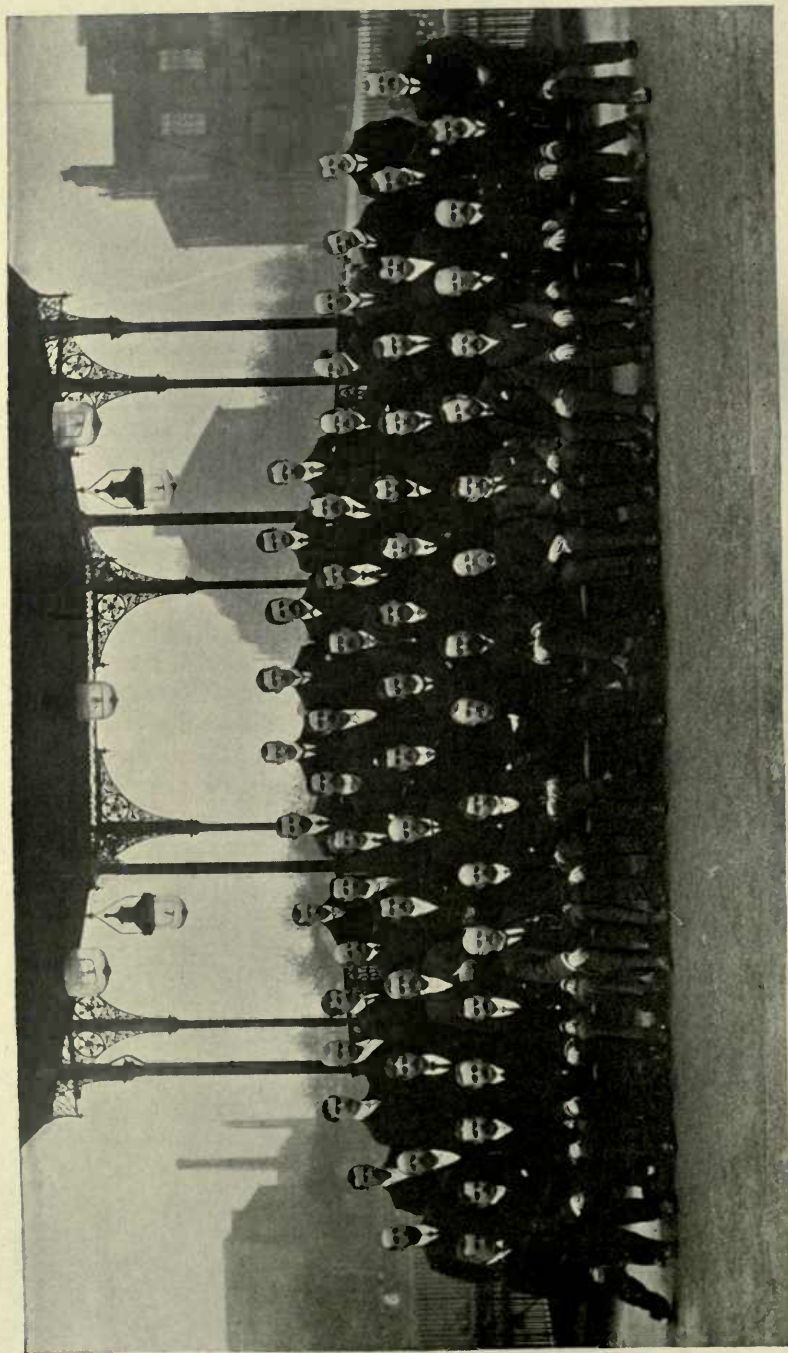
against the joint trades. Ultimately an agreement was accepted which bound the employers not to reduce wages for four years, and which similarly bound the workmen for one year, at the expiration of which term 1s. advance was promised if the general engineering trade showed a percentage of seven or less unemployed in accordance with Board of Trade returns.

Our Clyde members applied for an advance quite early in the year, and in connection with their application a most interesting statement was prepared, from which it appeared that the patternmakers in the district numbered 1,134, of whom 121 were out of work. This total included twenty-seven members of other societies and 105 non-society men. There were also 520 ordinary and twenty premium apprentices; 436 men were paid at 8½d. per hour and 378 received more, whilst seventy-nine were in receipt of less than that rate. Nine mechanical patternmaking machines were in use, all operated by patternmakers, whilst seven firms had sand-papering machines, and six had wheel cutting machines.

Our application was for an advance of ½d. per hour, and was duly placed before the local Employers' Federation at the usual conference, immediately after which we were informed that we must join hands with the other applying sectional societies who were not signatory to the engineers' '98 terms of agreement. We protested vigorously both to the employers and to our quondam allies, but ultimately joined up with them, with the distinct understanding that we reserved to ourselves the right of independent action. The offer of the employers was an all-round advance of ½d. per hour, to take effect three months hence, no change to take place for six months, and then be subject to the usual month's notice. These terms were accepted by all the trades, our vote being 366 for and 18 votes against, over 1,000 of our members not voting.

It is difficult to understand the reason for the policy of the employers in driving the sectional trades into coalition. It seemed at the time to be their fixed intention to deal only with two bodies of workmen—those who were under the law of the engineers' 1898 agreement and those who were under grace by being outside of that instrument. If their policy was the result of their objection to being pestered





DELEGATE MEETING, LEEDS, 1904.

by a succession of conferences with the representatives of a number of tin-pot organisations, with little to commend them except a quite exaggerated idea of their own importance, the employers have our entire sympathy, because by this time it was evident that however a conference varied in numbers and personnel the pace was set by the big battalions, and their settlement of general questions applied to all.

At Coventry an application was made for the restitution of the reduction of 1d. per hour exacted some months previous. A sub-committee of the employers agreed to recommend an advance of half that amount. The larger body, however, sought to limit this offer to those in receipt of 10d. or less per hour. As our minimum was 9d. per hour we accepted these terms by 69 to 2 votes.

At Birkenhead we obtained an advance of 1s. per week, with a seven-months no-change clause, and at Sandiacre we participated in a joint movement for a 2s. per week advance. Only one-half this sum was obtained, but certain improvements in overtime and general working conditions were conceded, which somewhat modified the ardour of the men concerned for the second instalment of their application. At Bradford a joint application for an advance of 2s. per week was settled at a Central Conference, 1s. being granted from 1st October; wages to remain undisturbed until the end of 1911.

Aberdeen applied for an advance of 1s., and were offered that sum, payable six months afterwards, which was accepted. At Rugby the co-operation of the A.S.E. was obtained to an application for a 2s. advance. We met with a refusal on account of an impending general movement, and the members of our trade agreed to mark time until the demand of the larger body was disposed of, when we obtained an advance to all in receipt of less than 38s. per week, with half that amount to those paid above that figure.

At Kilmarnock we asked for 2s. advance and received the offer of half that sum, which had been taken from us some eighteen months previously. Our chief object, however, was to establish a differential rate of 2s. per week between Kilmarnock and the Clyde, in which case we expressed our willingness that the future wage movements should be governed from the latter district. However, the employers

would not budge, and although the offer was rejected on a ballot vote the majority against acceptance was not sufficient to justify the E.C. in sanctioning a strike.

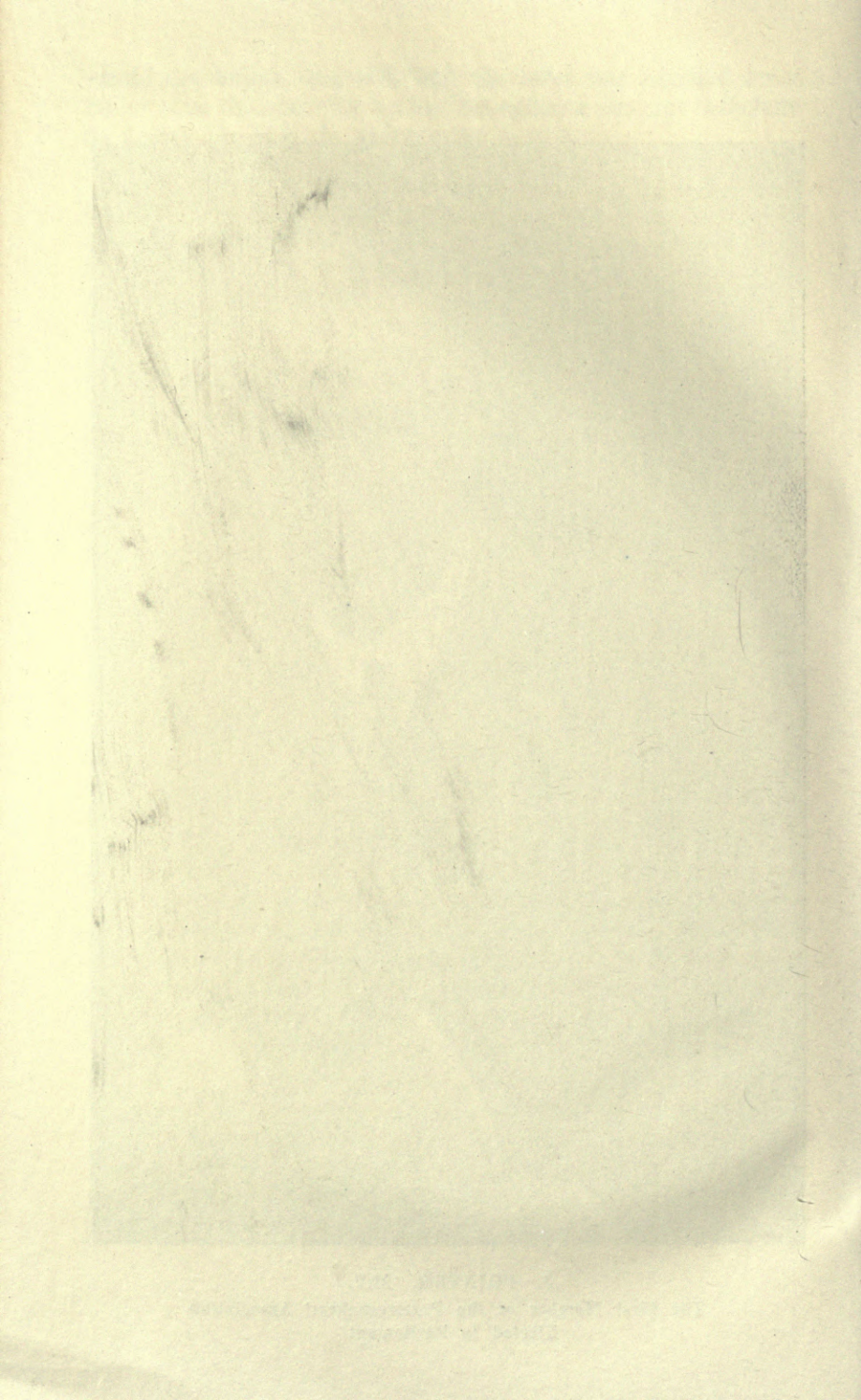
At Preston we put in for an advance of 2s. per week. The organisation of the employers in that district was very defective. There were nine firms, only three of which were in the Employers' Federation, and one non-federated firm employed two-thirds of the patternmakers in and around Preston; whilst of the three employers we met in conference not one employed a member of our trade. Our negotiations failed to elicit any offer, and a ballot vote of the trade showed 69 in favour, and 6 against tendering a week's notice. A few days' grace was given, but without result, and a general turn-out of our members, together with four A.S.E., took place on the 24th and 25th August. One firm employing fourteen men offered 1s. advance after the strike had lasted a few weeks, and this offer was accepted. The dispute dragged on until 30th January, 1911, when it was agreed to accept the Bolton and Bury settlement, with certain modifications, the actual terms accepted being 1s. advance from the second pay in February, 1911, without reservations as to the condition of trade, the enhanced rate to remain unaltered for four years from the date of settlement. These terms were accepted on a ballot vote by 31 to 5 votes. Dundee accepted an offer of 1s. per week, to be paid two months from the date of settlement.

At Halifax our members co-operated with the joint trades in seeking an advance of 2s. per week, but when the usual conference was held the employers declined to receive our representatives, no reason being given. The other trades were offered 1s. advance from February, and we were assured of a full consideration of any application we might subsequently make.

We applied to the Welsh Engineers and Founders' Association for an advance of 2s. per week, and after the usual conference were offered one-half that sum, to embrace the entire South Wales district, which offer was accepted; and a tedious and protracted campaign instituted amongst the non-federated firms in that district which eventually proved successful.



J. POINTER, M.P.
The First Member of the Patternmakers' Association
Elected to Parliament.



The long drawn out negotiations with the Coventry employers with regard to a code of working conditions for the district were brought to a conclusion during the earlier part of the year, when we succeeded in obtaining the insertion of a clause that patternmakers should not be called upon to work piecework. Other clauses in the agreement did not specially concern our trade.

We had the usual trouble of unauthorised persons working at our trade; this time at Portsmouth, where shipwrights were started at ship patternmaking. Our protest resulted in the interlopers being removed and patternmakers substituted. At Cowes a similar grievance arose, the delinquents in this case being our old friends the joiners. It appeared that they had done this work for twenty-six years without objection, but the firm undertook that vacancies in future should be filled by our members, and in the course of decades the grievance would right itself; with which settlement and its resultant conclusions our members were quite satisfied.

During this year our attitude toward direct Parliamentary representation was severely tested. We had made ourselves responsible for the candidature of Bro. J. Pointer, who represented Attercliffe in the House of Commons. The Osborne decision prevented the expenditure of any of the society's funds on account of his election expenses, and steps were being taken in the society and in his constituency to raise a voluntary fund to pay these costs.

A General Election came sooner than we expected, and at the beginning of the year our candidate had to contest the seat, which he won by 7,755 votes to 6,079 cast for his opponent. The E.C. anticipated the voluntary contributions which were being subscribed, and advanced £300 toward the expenses of his election; and they put forward the most strenuous efforts to collect money from our members not only to cover the cost of the two contested elections in which we had been engaged, but also in anticipation of a third, which was expected about June, 1910. Whilst every nerve was being strained to collect funds a writ was received from one of our members seeking not only to prohibit any further expenditure of the society's funds for this purpose, but demanding restitution to the funds of the £600 already

expended. Subsequently the writ was amended so as not to be retrospective, on our giving an undertaking that in future none of the society's moneys should be used or lent for Parliamentary purposes. We did not contest this case in the Chancery Court, as we had no defence and wished to save the society the expense of abortive legal proceedings. All the same, the costs reached the substantial sum of £87 13s. 3d., which fell to be debited against the voluntary fund we were straining every effort to establish.

The continual appeals which were being made on the members for voluntary subscriptions apparently got on the nerves of quite a number, and a resolution was sent in from Wallsend that we withdraw altogether from the scheme of Parliamentary representation. This, however, was lost, 584 voting for, and 1,011 against, the aggregate vote representing only 22 per cent. of our total membership. Under these circumstances it is scarcely to be wondered at that our voluntary Parliamentary Fund hung fire, the monthly record of subscriptions getting smaller by degrees and beautifully less, and, to add to our troubles, a General Election took place at the end of the year, in regard to which, and by the expressed will of the society, we were expected to foot the bill for the expenses of the election—the third within twenty months. By an exercise of ingenious sophistry, which would have made the fortune of a low-grade lawyer, the E.C. made a grant of £100 toward the costs of the election, as representing the approximate voluntary subscriptions of the members to our Parliamentary Fund, prior to the Chancery Court injunction being made absolute, an infraction of the injunction for which we were promptly brought to book. We, however, returned the soft answer which turned away wrath. But an intimation was given that the E.C. would take neither further risks nor responsibility with regard to Parliamentary representation; and if our members desired to have one of their own fellow members in that position they would have to pay his election expenses out of their own pockets.

Whilst there was no doubt that the prevailing sentiment of the members who troubled to vote was strongly in favour of our identifying ourselves with the principle of Labour representation in Parliament, the evidence was equally convincing that they were not inclined to give practical and

financial application to these principles, as our voluntary fund gradually dwindled until, in the course of two or three years, the subscriptions stopped altogether, leaving us with a deficiency of over £300, which was carried forward until an alteration of the law allowed a fund to be created by the allocation from the weekly contributions of the members.

It may be noted that the voluntary subscriptions had ceased before the untimely death of Bro. Pointer in November, 1914, and if any excuse is needed for the drying up of the income to this fund it is to be found in the fact that we had so big a deficiency to wipe off that the most enthusiastic of our Labour Representationists realised the hopelessness of ever paying our debts, far less building up a fund for future contests.

Our insolvency resulted in our withdrawing from affiliation with the Labour Party, after we attended one conference, as an injuncted society by special invitation. The total amount raised by the voluntary subscriptions of our members was £165. But it may be noted that several branches sent their subscriptions direct to the Sheffield Trades and Labour Council, preferring that they should be used for the purposes of present election rather than in flogging the dead horse of a deficiency incurred in a past contest.

During this year the agitation which had been slowly gathering force against the premium bonus system assumed definite form. The Trades Union Congress Parliamentary Committee were nominally at the head of the movement, the executive and administrative work being in the hands of the Federation of Engineering Trades, with whom were associated the General Federation of Trades. An exhaustive inquiry had been instituted in various engineering centres throughout the country, and a report had been issued to the trades concerned. The Chairman of the Advisory Committee was Mr. (now Sir) D. Shackleton, the Secretary being the then General Secretary of our society. It was decided to bring the matter to an issue by a vote, and a resolution was framed asking the societies concerned whether they were in favour of abolishing the system by (1) negotiation with the employers, and (2) if peaceful measures prove abortive, by a cessation of work.

Our vote was emphatic, 1,612 being in favour of joint action, and 156 against. Eighteen months afterwards a complete record of the votes of the affiliated societies showed 95,738 for, and 9,695 against joint action. This seemed conclusive enough in all conscience; but other questions had arisen, notably the National State Insurance Act, which absorbed the attention and energies of the affiliated societies, and the movement petered out, "as it was felt advisable to mark time until a more opportune occasion arose for a further consideration of this question, and in the meantime the Advisory Committee will be glad to hear of any attempts to introduce this system where it is not at present in operation, together with the action the trades affected may adopt to prevent its introduction or extension." This was the expiring act of the Advisory Committee, and the question of joint action to procure the abolition of a system which had been universally condemned, especially by those who did not work it, came to an untimely, painless, and inglorious end without even a decent burial.

During the year a new and quite original system of audit was introduced; the General Secretary, when time and circumstances permitted, conducting a surprise examination of the books of any branch which he was visiting in the course of his ordinary delegation work, the results of his audit being summarised in the Monthly Report. The object was to point out what might be book-keeping errors, which would be remedied wherever they occurred. It cannot be said these audits were successful in their object. The same errors constantly recurred in spite of printed explanations and exhortations; and as some of our branch secretaries rather objected to having their deficiencies exposed, and the whole system was somewhat haphazard and uneven, the practice gradually fell into disuse, and was finally abandoned, except in such cases where a branch secretary requested a special examination of his books.

On February 1st of this year Labour Exchanges were formally instituted. They were received without enthusiasm by the Trade Union movement, and so far as we were, and are, concerned their influence in obtaining employment for our out-of-work members is absolutely nil, and had it not

been for their utilisation for the payment of State Unemployment Insurance they would never have justified their existence.

The question of what is euphemistically called "Closer Unity" assumed considerable importance during the year. Every trade cried out for it and professed their willingness to do all in their power to put an end to all internecine discord and present a united front to the adversary, provided that the autonomy for which they stood and which constituted the foundation and keystone of their particular organisation was not interfered with. Oceans of talk and reams of pamphlets were loosed upon the generally indifferent rank and file with varying results, the only unanimity shown being that whilst every other society must subordinate its own special interests to the general welfare that excellent principle cannot under any circumstances apply to "my" society, whose constitution and policy is applicable to the interests of our trade and can only be understood and administered by those inside that trade. And so this vital question has been dallied with and bandied about for years because of the indifference of the rank and file and the determination of the officials to put the shibboleth of autonomy before the principles of industrial solidarity. Considerable progress has been made in the latter direction during the last two years, but we have still a long way to go before we achieve that consolidation and unity of purpose and policy which is necessary before the emancipation of Labour is possible.

Our efforts to improve wages conditions merited a greater degree of success than was actually achieved. In twenty-three branches, representing some 2,000 of our members, advances were obtained; in no case exceeding 1s. per week, our average being raised by 3d. per member per week, and making our general average wage rate £1 18s. 1d. at the end of the year.

We made no addition to our branches during the year, which remained at eighty-seven. But our membership continued to expand, 625 new members being recorded during the year, which was a considerable increase in our admissions during the two previous years. Fourteen of these entrants were Trade Protection members. Our exclusions numbered

320, and our total gain for the year numbered 188, which gave us a membership of 7,214 at the end of the year.

Financially we did very well. Our income amounted to £25,347, or £3 10s. 3½d. per member, by far the highest aggregate and, with one exception, the highest proportionate income in our history. It exceeded our previous year's income per member by 9s. 1d.; due not to any increase in contributions, but to the fact that more members were paying and fewer drawing than during 1909. Expenditure amounted to £19,252, or £2 13s. 4½d. per member, or £10,000 less than we spent the previous year, the decrease being £1 10s. per member. Our gain amounted to £6,094, and our total balance at the end of the year reached the substantial figure of £40,872, or £5 13s. 4d. per member.

The expenditure to Trade Fund amounted to £8,465, or £1 3s. 5½d. per member, nearly £11,000 less than for the previous year. Sick Benefit showed a slight reduction, management a slight increase, and Tool Benefit an increase of £400; whilst superannuation cost £262 more than we spent on this benefit in 1909.

1911.

The general condition of trade could not be described as good during the year. By the test of comparison it showed a considerable improvement over the conditions which had applied to our trade for the five previous years; but there were always more patternmakers than there were jobs, and very few branches had to call upon idle members from other districts for assistance in staffing under-manned pattern-shops. At the beginning of the year we had 338 members out of work. That number was reduced to 178 in April, from which month our unemployed roll gradually crept up, and at the end of the year we had 265 members out of work. Our average monthly list totalled 237, and our percentage for the year was 3.2, the lowest for eight years.

The industrial position could scarcely be described as favourable to movements for improved workshop conditions, but we certainly made the most of the opportunities which appeared to present themselves, and during the year our programme was as full as ever we had experienced in our history.

A joint movement took place in Rochdale for an advance of 2s. per week. Our local branch accepted the terms agreed to by the larger trades of 1s. per week advance from May 19th, the enhanced rate to remain in operation for three years.

A joint movement was initiated in Birmingham, in which we took part. The resultant conference was a curious departure from the stereotyped form with which we were all so familiar, and if any merit is attached to originality the procedure insisted upon certainly was to be commended. The employers insisted that before the conference was entered upon a written statement should be submitted giving the reason the workmen had for asking for an advance. This was refused; but when the meeting did take place the chairman insisted upon the points being placed before him *seriatim*, and also limited the number of speakers. No attempt was made to reply to the arguments of the workmen's delegates, an intimation being given that they would be duly considered. This necessitated a further conference, when an offer was made of an advance of 1s. per week on wages of 42s. and under and 2½ per cent. on piece prices, to commence the first full pay in July; wages to remain unaltered for three years from that date. The allied trades' Federation recommended the acceptance of this offer, which recommendation was confirmed by a ballot vote of the workmen.

Our Halifax movement pursued its rocky and even course, our object being to participate in the 1s. advance granted to the other sections of the engineering trade. Various firms were waited on, but without result, and ultimately we lodged notices to cease work if this advance was not conceded to us the second pay in March. This had the desired effect, and the advance was paid from that date.

At Coventry our members sought to establish a rate of 10d. per hour in master patternmakers' shops. This rate was being generally paid, and little difficulty was experienced in making it operative. This success stimulated our members to ask for an all-round advance of ½d. per hour toward the end of the year. The co-operation of the A.S.E. and S.E.M. having been secured, a joint application was sent in, and with the utmost difficulty a local conference was arranged,

at which a point blank refusal was given to our application. The fact that a few A.S.E. and S.E.M. patternmakers were involved prevented any drastic action being taken until our application had been dealt with at Central Conference. We, of course, were not represented, and the best offer obtainable was an advance of $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per hour, with a five years' no-change arrangement. The position here and elsewhere was intolerable. We initiated the movement, carried it through to its final stages, represented nine-tenths of the men concerned, and were prevented from making the final presentation of our case because we were not parties to the terms for the prevention of disputes in the engineers' terms of settlement.

The North-East Coast Conciliation Board functioned at the beginning of the year by granting 1s. per week, payable as from the first full week after 15th December, 1910; a further similar advance to be granted the first full pay after June 14th; the enhanced rates to remain undisturbed for a period of five years thereafter. Our local District Committee obtained an advance of 2s. to 3s. to our members in the Darlington railway shops, making their rate 38s. per week; also, young journeymen received a starting rate of 26s., the minimum to be reached in two years. This was quite an innovation, as hitherto we had been unable to deal with railway shops.

At Lincoln our members undertook the first really aggressive movement in which they had ever been engaged. In June, 1910, we had tried for a 34s. rate, but were refused even the poor consolation of a conference with the employers' organisation. The question was allowed to simmer for a few months, during which our members were doing some hard thinking, which resulted in a meeting of the trade being held in February, when a muster of seventy-nine out of eighty-two patternmakers were present, two being absent sick—this must constitute a record past, present, and to come. A review of the whole situation was made and a formal application for an advance of 2s. per week was made. A subsequent meeting, equally representative, decided that if no advance was offered a week's notice should be given. All overtime had been stopped, and it is safe to say that not a single individual who attended the second meeting expected a peaceful settlement. However, as is invariably the case, when

the employers realised that we meant business they accorded us a conference, and ultimately a settlement was effected, 1s. advance being given on April 1st and a further 1s. on October 1st; no alteration either way to take place for four years from the latter date; this being one of the first occasions upon which we managed to get out of the rut of 1s. advance.

At Chester a joint wages movement resulted in 1s. advance being granted as from September 2nd; no change to take place for three years. This raised our rate to 36s. per week, and we subsequently succeeded in obtaining that wage in Sandycroft by written communication. At Belfast we took part in our first joint wages movement in that port. As usual, the first movement was made against the two non-federated shipbuilding firms in the port, who wished to except our trade from any arrangement made with the other trades on the ground that we had received our advance three years ago. However, as a result of our representations that attitude was abandoned, and an offer was made of 1s. advance the first pay in April and a further 1s. the first pay in November. The federated employers took their workmen's representatives to a Central Conference, when we dropped out, the result being 1s. advance from first pay in June and a second 2s. from the first pay in January.

At Wigan we obtained the co-operation of the A.S.E. to an application for 2s. advance and enhanced rates for young journeymen. The best terms obtainable were an immediate advance of 1s.; young men to receive 26s. per week on completion of apprenticeship, with 2s. advance every three months; full rate to be paid at the end of fifteen months. These terms were accepted.

At the beginning of the year, the six months no-change embargo having expired, our Clyde District Committee applied for an advance of $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per hour, with an additional $\frac{1}{4}$ d. for Johnstone; this to bring that town up to the Clyde rate. In addition, we associated our society with a movement initiated by the Associated Patternmakers of Scotland, who were applying for an advance of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per hour in Falkirk and the light casting shops in North Glasgow. We also decided to run this movement on our own; but the gods decreed otherwise, the employers insisting that the societies non-signatory

to the engineers' agreement—seven in number—should join together in the presentation of their case. This was agreed to, your General Secretary acting as chairman and chief spokesman of the allied organisations, it being distinctly understood that this alliance did not pledge any of the non-signatory trades to accept any terms which were not approved by their own members—a quite unnecessary stipulation, as subsequent events proved. The employers offered us our $\frac{1}{4}$ d. advance with a three years no-change arrangement. These terms had previously been offered to and rejected by the signatory societies, who had demanded a Central Conference. Under these circumstances there was nothing for it but to mark time until events had progressed somewhat at York. A settlement was affected there by the acceptance of the signatory societies of 1s. advance in May, with a further 1s. the first pay in January; no change on either side to take place for five years. The joint trades did not agree to the latter part of this settlement, but accepted an immediate 1s. or $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per hour for six months; any change to be subject to one month's notice by either side. In addition, we obtained an additional $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per hour for Johnstone, thus assimilating the rate there with that of the Clyde district.

The joint movement of the Scottish Patternmakers' Society at Falkirk succeeded in obtaining advances of from 1s. to 5s. per week, a graduated scale being agreed to which matured on November 15th, when a minimum rate was established. The light casting shops in Glasgow agreed to an advance of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per hour, after the usual pressure and delay. At the expiration of the six months no-change arrangement with the Clyde employers we applied for a further advance of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per hour. The same procedure was followed as in our movement at the beginning of the year, and we, in common with the six other non-signatory societies, got the same offer as we had then of 1s. or $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per hour advance from the first pay in January, with no change for three years. This latter proviso was somewhat shorter than had been accepted by the engineers, and, needless to say, was accepted by the whole of the trades concerned.

The arrangement made by the joint trades with the Nottingham employers, that an advance of 1s. would be granted if at the beginning of the year the percentage of unemployed

workmen in the district did not exceed 11.6 per cent., was repudiated by the local Employers' Association and referred to a Central Conference, when the advance was given from the end of March; the enhanced rates to remain undisturbed for six months from that date.

At Edinburgh we succeeded in terminating a long-standing grievance by assimilating the rate paid there with the Clyde rates. This meant $\frac{1}{4}$ d. advance, and the conference at which this arrangement was made was remarkable as being the first and last occasion when formal objection was made by the employers to the presence of your General Secretary. The objection was not persisted in, but that it was made serves to show that local Employers' Associations enjoyed a considerable degree of autonomy. The Kirkcaldy employers gave the same advance as their Edinburgh contemporaries, although they objected that their rates should be governed, both as regarded amount and time, by the rates paid on the Clyde, as was then the case in Edinburgh and Leith.

At Blackburn we obtained the Bolton and Bury settlement of 1s. advance from 26th May, with a three years no-change arrangement. At St. Helens a similar settlement was effected, except that the advance dated from July 1st. At Leeds we were associated with the other trades in an application for a 2s. advance. We got no farther than the preliminary local conference, when it was decided to refer the application to a Central Conference, when 1s. was granted from the first pay in August.

A joint application for a 2s. advance was made to the Leicester and Loughborough employers, one-half that amount being offered. The matter was referred to Central Conference, where the same advance was offered, to date from August 14th, with a three years no-change agreement. This was accepted, although we made further and unsuccessful efforts to obtain the full amount of our application for Loughborough. We did, however, manage to escape the three years no-change clause.

At Motherwell we applied for an advance of 2s. per week, and had to prefer this application by the wearisome methods of calling upon each firm. We succeeded in obtaining an immediate advance of 1s. and the promise of a further 1s.

six months afterwards. At Donnington a similar settlement was effected and by the same methods. An alternative proposal that the interval between the two advances be cut down to three months, with a three years no-change proviso was turned down by our local members.

At Peterborough we asked for 2s. advance and settled for 1s. in June and an additional 1s. the first pay in December, with a no-change arrangement for five years. The engineers had previously settled on these terms, but as we had obtained a "solo" advance of 1s. per week the previous September we had done fairly well. Our rate at the end of the year was 8½d. per hour.

At Oldham we were not so fortunate. We invited the co-operation of the A.S.E. in an application for an advance of 2s. They were willing to co-operate, but were unrepresented at the first conference, where we got a point blank refusal, the reason being that the A.S.E. had sent in a separate demand for their seven members, who were originally concerned, and the employers quite naturally concluded that separate counsels existed from which they hoped to profit. However, as negotiations proved fruitless, the whole of the patternmakers in the town, including twelve A.S.E. members and five non-society men, lifted their tools on September 23rd. So far as the A.S.E. men were concerned this was a distinct violation of the provisions for avoiding disputes in their 1897 agreement, and they were compelled to return to work pending a Central Conference, when they were offered 1s. advance, to date from 30th October, the enhanced rate to remain undisturbed for six months. This offer was extended to us, when 19 voted for and 19 against acceptance. The necessary two-thirds majority for remaining out not having been obtained, the strike came to an abrupt and somewhat inglorious termination.

Our Chesterfield members made their first attempt at collective action by first enlisting the active sympathy of the A.S.E. and S.E.M., then making application for an advance of 2s. per week. The employers intimated that they preferred to deal with their own men, and our members nothing loath, appointed shop deputations and accepted an offer of 1s. the first pay in August and a second 1s. the first pay in December.

Our Carlisle members obtained an advance of 2s. per week by detachments so as to avoid the appearance of a general rise in wages, and at once sought the same concession from the Workington employers. Our Southampton members, in common with the other sections of the engineering trade, received an advance of 1s. per week from July 1st, which appears to have acted as a tonic, as two months later we find them associating with the other trades in seeking a further advance of 4s. per week, subsequently modified to one-half that amount. When in conference the employers objected to the inclusion of the hammermen, which delayed matters somewhat, and an ultimate settlement was agreed to of 1s. advance payable from January 1st, making our rate 41s.

At Luton we associated ourselves with a general movement which obtained an immediate advance of 1s. and a further increase of the same amount six months afterwards. In reply to our application, Kilmarnock employers offered us 1s. from 10th August, no alteration to take place for twelve months from that date. We objected to the embargo on our future action and succeeded in having it removed. These terms were subsequently applied to the non-associated firms in the district.

Our Dundee Branch initiated a movement for an advance of wages which merged into a general application for that amount. The A.S.E. and Blacksmiths found it advisable to withdraw, and we then made formal application for a 2s. advance and accepted half that amount from 13th January, 1912, with no alteration for six months.

Our Reading members, in co-operation with the other trades, obtained a 2s. advance from the first pay in October. A joint movement took place in Derby to obtain a 2s. advance and a reduction of hours to fifty-three. In the end 1s. was offered from the first pay in November, and it was proposed to reduce the hours from the first full pay in March, 1912. No alteration in either hours or wages for a period of three years from November, except in the case of a national reduction of hours. These terms were accepted by 424 to 169 votes.

Our Huddersfield members had the unique experience of receiving 1s. advance without the asking, making their rate 37s.

per week. Aberdeen asked for the unusual advance of 1s. 6d. per week and were given 1s. Our Bristol Branch participated in a joint movement for a 2s. advance and a reduction of hours to 53. The latter application was granted, together with an advance of wages which brought our rate up to 40s. 3d.

At Cowes our members applied for an advance of 4s. 6d. per week, by far the most ambitious attempt to increase wages on record. Our audacity met with its reward, the standard rate being increased by 1s. 6d. per week, with a further increase of 1s. the first pay in January. These advances increased our rates to £2 per week. Cardiff had two rates of pay, 38s. per week being paid in seven foundries in the town and 43s. in the ship-repairing yards. A further advance was promised in the latter establishments, and a joint movement was initiated to raising rates in the foundries.

At Stafford a joint movement sought to increase wages by 2s. per week, with 5 per cent. on piece prices. As the result of a conference an advance of 2s. in two instalments was made to all having 36s. and under, but nothing to machine workers. This offer gave no increase to the majority of our trade, whose rate was 38s., and it was decided to carry the matter to Central Conference. At Wolverhampton, with Dudley and Darlaston, we took the preliminary steps to obtain an advance of 2s. per week. A few of our members had filtered back to Newark, and they took part in our application for an advance of wages. The employers at once offered 2s., with the substitution of piecework for the bonus system. The advance in wages was accepted, but no alteration in the general working conditions was effected.

In London, with the co-operation of the A.S.E. and S.E.M., we fixed a rate of 10½d. per hour for all master pattern-makers' shops. This meant an advance of ½d. per hour, and referred to twenty-four shops employing sixty journeymen. We succeeded in establishing our rate with but little difficulty. At one firm working the eight-hour system an application was made for an advance of 3s. per week to bring the shop up to the London rate. No advance had been paid in this establishment for thirteen years.

We made an application at Grantham for an advance of 2s. per week in order to bring our rate up to that paid in

Nottingham, viz., 39s. We were referred to the Nottingham Employers' Federation, but ultimately succeeded in making a local settlement, 1s. being granted, to operate within two weeks of October 17th, and a further individual advance of the same amount to be completed by the first pay in January. Gloucester joined with other trades in seeking an advance of 2s. per week, which was granted by the two chief firms, two smaller firms coming into line shortly afterwards. In this case the firms preferred to deal directly with their own men.

A joint wages movement at Liverpool and Birkenhead resulted in the offer of 1s. per week from January, 1912, with a three years no-change agreement, to date from July, from the Birkenhead employers. Liverpool offered 1s. in November and a similar sum in July, with a three years agreement. Both Employers' Associations gave a point blank refusal to a request for a reduction of hours on the ground that "hours" were a national question. In the case of Liverpool the 2s. was ultimately granted from the first pay in January, without splitting or condition.

At the annual pilgrimage to the Dockyards we focussed our efforts on the chief grievance of which we complained, viz.: Our wage had stood at 36s. for thirty years; we now asked for a 2s. advance. As at that time it took about fifteen months to get a reply, the result cannot appear in this place. Bradford joined with the engineering trades in seeking an advance of 2s. per week, and our Coatbridge Branch took the initial steps to obtain a similar concession.

Other movements for the protection and betterment of our trade included a successful objection of our Llanelly members to a boy serving his apprenticeship to our trade on the ground that he was in excess of the proper proportion of lads to journeymen. At Crewe and Horwich the joint trades made a strong attempt to secure the recognition by the railway companies of the Trade Unions representing their own workmen. Although we took no part at Horwich, where there were quite a formidable list of grievances which led to a strike, our members being locked out by the management. At Crewe a ballot of the workmen was overwhelmingly in favour of a strike to secure recognition, whilst at Horwich

the strike on this issue was extended so as to secure a minimum of 20s. per week for labourers and the abolition of a system of medical inspection, to which strong objection was taken. However, the management proved obdurate and refused to consider any grievance until the men returned to work, when it was promised that favourable consideration would be given to the labourers' minimum wage, that the works committee should be reconstituted on a more democratic basis, and should deal with this question, failing which arbitration would be resorted to, and that the question of "recognition" should be dealt with by a Commission then sitting. These promises were accepted and the men returned to work, this being the only recorded instance in which skilled men prolonged a strike in order to try and secure an advance in wages to unskilled workmen.

At Coventry a joint effort to reduce overtime was made, but like all overtime restriction questions, it never seemed to have sufficient backing to prove a real deterrent. On the Mersey an attempt was made to obtain for our members engaged in bushing stern tubes and other ship-repairing work more generous allowances. Joiners doing this work received much better rates than did our members, who were responsible for the work. At Bristol the local Federation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades succeeded in obtaining from the Swansea Harbour Trust a 53-hour week from 15th October to 15th March, the 54 hours being worked during the remaining seven months of the year.

A large firm in Manchester made an attempt to introduce the premium bonus system into their pattern shop. The A.S.E. strongly opposed this innovation, and we as strongly supported them in their attitude, and at Sheffield the joint trades made an attempt to secure improved working conditions in regard to overtime, outworking allowances, and certain concessions to our trade, which do not, however, appear to have advanced beyond the preliminary stage.

The chief characteristic of our numerous wage movements during 1911 was the time embargo with which almost every settlement was encumbered. This was quite a new feature and was insisted upon by the employers on the ground that it was absolutely necessary, if they entered into contracts, that

they should know what their cost of manufacture should be. Whether this was the real and only reason it is impossible to tell, but it was during the year under review that stabilisation of wages became the chief factor in wages settlements. The record of our various wages movements, in which we had to resort to only one strike, appear to have been a case of much cry and little wool, as our average rate only advanced 11d. per member per week during the year, our general average wages being 39s. per week at the end of 1911.

We added two branches to our number during the year, bringing our total to 89. Membership showed a most satisfactory increase, admissions totalling 782, of whom 33 were Trade Protection members. Exclusions numbered 261, our net gain being 420, giving us a total membership at the end of the year of 7,634, one of the best results recorded in our history. We were equally successful from a financial point of view. Our income amounted to £26,709, or £3 9s. 11½d. per member; expenditure was £16,309, or £2 2s. 8½d. per member, nearly 11s. per member less than for the year previous and little more than one-half of our expenses for 1909. Our gain amounted to £10,399, and our balance at the end of the year stood at £51,271, or £6 14s. 4d. per member, being £1 1s. per member more than we possessed at the end of the previous year.

The chief reason for a successful financial year was lessened expenditure for Trade Benefit, which cost us £5,600, or £2,865 less than for the previous year, and less than one-third of our expenditure under this heading during 1909. Sick Benefit, however, showed an increase of £400 over the previous year's figures, tool insurance was £240 less, and superannuation £260 more than we spent during 1910. Altogether, judging from the standpoint of eleven years ago, a strenuous and successful record.

1912.

The figures indicating the number of our unemployed members each month are somewhat misleading and can scarcely be claimed to represent the true state of trade. A general strike of miners in March resulted in an increase of our idle roll from under 300 to over 900, and two strikes in which we were engaged had a similar effect in abnormally

increasing the number of our members returned as being out of work. Our average per month was 393 and our percentage five, both figures being much higher than those of the year previous. The general state of trade was much better than is represented in our statistical tables, and in consequence our activities in seeking to improve wages conditions were more varied and successful than could reasonably be expected from our published returns.

The most important movement in which we were concerned during the year was at Coventry, where we sought the restitution of the 1d. per hour reduction which had been enforced against us some time previously. An advance of $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per hour was offered as the result of a Central Conference, at which we were not represented. This offer was refused, and a strike ensued which lasted six months and was eventually settled through the intervention of the mayor. It was a sorry ending, as it was with extreme difficulty that we induced the local employers to give us the advance we spurned when first offered. It was given subject to our acceptance of a five years no-change agreement, the enhanced rate being $9\frac{3}{4}$ d. per hour.

At Bradford a joint movement succeeded in obtaining an advance of 1s. per week. At Ashton a joint movement was instituted for a 2s. advance, with 5 per cent. on piece prices. After some delay a conference was held, when the employers offered to advance the wages of patternmakers, smiths, and strikers to the Manchester rates, and that in future wages rise and fall with those in that city. This offer was refused, and ultimately an all-round advance of 1s. was accepted; the question of the assimilation of the wages of these named trades with Manchester rates to stand over for six months, when the employers promised sympathetic consideration to any further representations the three trades might make.

Kilmarnock received an advance of 1s. per week, to date from 14th March, with no change for three years. We were involved in a three months' strike at the chief firm in Birkenhead, where an advance of 2s. was demanded. One shilling was offered and refused. The extra 1s. was, however, obtained after the resumption of work through Board of Trade arbitration. This raised our rates to those

paid in Liverpool, viz., £2 2s. 6d. per week. At the same time a successful application was made to the Liverpool employers for an advance of 2s. per week, which, so far as the Federated employers were concerned, was granted through a Central Conference. A joint wages application in Stafford obtained an advance of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per hour in two instalments, with a six months' interval, with a five years no-change arrangement.

We had quite a busy time in seeking concessions from the Government. At Chatham, as in other dockyard centres, we focussed on wages, repeating our application for a 38s. minimum, and as a side line we succeeded in obtaining an advance of 1s. from the only firm in that district outside the dockyard. The Admiralty showed unusual celerity in giving us the usual "cannot be acceded to." We had another try for a 2s. advance by direct application to Whitehall, and were informed that we must take advantage of the facilities offered at the various dockyards to ventilate our grievances and prefer our requests. We did so and were accorded a courteous reception and a patient hearing.

At Edinburgh and Barrow our wages were increased one month after the Clyde advance, in accordance with our agreement, and the former branch made an unsuccessful attempt to raise the rates paid at Leven to those paid on the Forth; our members coming out on strike and remaining out for five days, when they accepted an advance of 1d. per hour, making their rate $8\frac{1}{2}$ d., or $\frac{1}{2}$ d. less than they were seeking to establish.

At Cardiff, where our rate was 45s. per week in ship-repairing yards, with a 47-hour week for six months in the year, an attempt was made to raise the rates paid in foundries. Ultimately a rate of 41s. for fifty-three hours was agreed to in these establishments. At Bath a joint movement succeeded in obtaining an all-round advance of wages. At Coatbridge we obtained a concession of $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per hour, to date from 19th February; and an application was made in December for a further increase of $\frac{1}{2}$ d., so as to establish a 9d. per hour rate. At Colchester our members identified themselves with a general movement to obtain an advance of wages, whilst at Newport we made a similar attempt to

improve the conditions which applied to our trade. At Nottingham we were concerned in a joint application for an advance of wages. A joint movement of sixteen societies in Leeds succeeded in obtaining an advance of 1s. per week, to date from the first pay in September.

Our Dundee members sought an advance of 2s. per week, and, after considerable bargaining, obtained 1s. from 4th October and a similar advance from 6th June, 1913, the enhanced rates to remain undisturbed until the end of January, 1915. At Motherwell we managed to provoke the strong arm of the law, our members having left work without notice in order to enforce an advance of 2s. They were threatened with legal proceedings for breach and returned to work a week's notice, when they were offered an advance of 1s., which they refused, and again came out on strike and remained out until some obtained work elsewhere, the remainder being granted the rate they were seeking.

The engineers employed at Otley instituted a movement to secure an advance of wages with a 53-hour week. We had a few members in that low-paid town, our objective being a standardised rate of 36s. per week. At Swansea and Llanelly we applied for an advance of 3s. per week and received an offer of 2s. in two instalments; subsequently increased to 1s 3d. advance the first pay in January, 1913, with a further 1s. the first pay in April, the enhanced rates to remain unchanged until 1914. These terms were rejected by 19 to 31 votes, but as a majority of two-thirds had not been secured, and as the aggregate vote was small and the amount at issue 6d. per week, the E.C. did not feel justified in sanctioning a strike.

At Huddersfield we took part in a general movement to obtain an advance of 2s. per week, which was granted subject to an agreement that no change should take place for three years. A joint movement in Manchester sought an advance of 3s. and 7½ per cent. on piece prices. Agreement was reached on the basis of 1s. advance from the second full pay in November, with a further 1s. two months afterwards. No change to take place for three years and then be subject to three months' notice on either side. Piece prices were advanced by 5 per cent. in two instalments.

Our Falkirk Branch celebrated their entry into the U.P.M.A. by an attempt to secure 1d. per hour advance so as to bring their rate up to those paid on the Clyde and Forth. We were offered 1s., to date from 1st April, 1913, which our members rejected. A subsequent offer shortened the date to the first pay in January, and was further amended to include youths who had been three years at the trade. Although a majority of our members voted against acceptance, the dissentients were not numerous enough to justify a strike. A joint movement in Oldham secured an advance of 2s. in two instalments at two months' interval. Aberdeen obtained a similar advance, the first 1s. being paid the first full pay in December and a further like sum on 14th June, 1913, with a three years no-change arrangement.

At Belfast we secured the co-operation of the A.S.E. and obtained an advance of 1s. the first pay in January, 1913, with a further 1s. three months afterwards, no change to take place for three years from the former date. At Rugby a joint movement obtained an advance of $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per hour, to date from the first day in January, 1913. At Leyland our Preston members asked an advance of 3s. per week to bring them up to Manchester rate; 2s. was offered and accepted. At Warrington, Halifax, and Bedford our local members associated themselves with general movements to obtain advances of wages, whilst at Gloucester an attempt to obtain an advance to our members employed at Stroud had an unsatisfactory ending owing to the imperfect organisation of our trade in that district.

We had a considerable degree of variety in respect to our other movements apart from wages. Bradford objected to our members in one firm working with an expelled ex-member, and lifted their tools in an abortive attempt to effect his removal. At Southampton a joint effort to obtain the 53-hour week was successful when a general turn-out appeared inevitable. At Barrow the Steel Works followed the example of their bigger contemporaries and introduced the premium bonus system into their patternshop. We offered a strenuous resistance, but two of our members refused to come out, and after a few weeks two others started under the system, which apparently furnished the firm with all the patternmakers they required. At the same time we

received the gratifying information that the Admiralty had decided to suspend this system from the only two dockyards in which it was worked—Chatham and Sheerness. This decision did not concern our trade. We took part in a joint movement at Preston, which secured enhanced rates of payment for five stated holidays in the year, excluding Good Friday and Christmas Day.

At Thames Ditton we associated our members with a general movement to prevent a reversion from fifty to fifty-four hours per week. At Sheffield a joint movement secured improved working conditions. We came in with an allowance of five minutes each evening and fifteen minutes on Saturday for cleaning and putting away tools. We also objected to a Sheffield firm putting a low-paid machineman on a pattern-making machine. At Govan we were just as emphatic in our objections to the employment of a labourer at a sand-papering machine. At Leicester the initial steps were taken to obtain a reduction of hours to fifty-three or, alternatively, a fifty-hour week, with one break. At Loughborough we put up a determined resistance to the introduction of the premium bonus to our trade by the chief firm in that town.

By far the most important event of 1912 was the coming into operation of the National Insurance Act, both parts of which became operative from 15th July, 1912. It cannot be said that either State Sickness or Unemployment Insurance was popular with such Trade Unions as paid these benefits. The idea was that the Government was entering into competition with the unions, and that workmen would regard compulsory State Insurance as a substitute and not as an auxiliary to the benefits provided by their voluntary organisations. No definite and determined objection was made to the Government proposals by the engineering and shipbuilding unions, but every effort was made by these organisations to amend the National Insurance Bill, and with a considerable degree of success. It must be admitted that the friendly and industrial collecting societies had a much larger interest in Part I. of the Bill dealing with Sickness Insurance than had the Trade Unions, and the former organisations speedily monopolised the position of chief critics and advisers in respect of this measure.

The unions with whom we were associated, chiefly through the Federation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades, were thus able to concentrate their attention on Part II. of the Bill dealing with Unemployment Insurance—and due credit must be given to the Board of Trade for the courtesy and adaptability they displayed in appreciating and, where practicable, giving effect to the amending proposals brought to their notice by the representatives of societies who had dealt with Unemployment Insurance from their institution.

When it became known that industrial combinations would be allowed to administer Part I. of the Act there ensued a keen and, at times, not over scrupulous competition for members. The unions realised that to obtain the selection by their own members of their Trade Union as their approved society would attach such members by a double tie, and we, in common with other organisations, used every means open to us to obtain as many of our own members as approved members under Part I. of the National Insurance Act.

We also made a strong appeal to apprentice patternmakers to select ours as their approved society. The result was entirely satisfactory: 5,874 members and 1,091 apprentices responded to our invitation, representing 73 per cent. of our journeymen members and 86 per cent. of our total membership, a result, we believe, unparalleled in any national Trade Union.

The Federation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades realised that it would considerably strengthen their position if they qualified as the central organisation representing the approved societies represented on their body, approached the National Insurance Commissioners and found there was no obstacle in the way of their qualifying as an approved society representing the affiliated unions for pooling purposes, only each society retaining its autonomy in respect to all other provisions of the Act. When our altruism is put to the test it usually fails, and the whole of the affiliated societies concluded that their interests lay in the direction of becoming separate and independent approved societies. Even the smaller organisations with membership of under 5,000, which, according to the Act, would be compulsorily pooled in three

years if they did not voluntarily enter into an arrangement satisfactory to the National Insurance Commissioners, decided to go on their own until, at all events, they had experienced three years' working of the Act.

So far as the influence of the Act upon ours and kindred organisations is concerned, our fears of the State as a competitor have not been realised. The administration of both parts of the Act has been much simpler than was anticipated, and we cannot say that the benefits paid under the Act have had any effect whatever in weakening the loyalty of our members to their society. If any effect whatever has been caused by the National Insurance Act it has been in the direction of strengthening the bond which attaches a workman to his Trade Union.

The institution of a National State System of Sickness and Unemployment Insurance and the incorporation of the rules relating to Part I. of the Act made it necessary to take a vote upon the propriety of holding a delegate meeting to adapt our rules to the new conditions, as also to revise our existing rules. The meeting was held in Manchester from the 8th to 14th July. Seventy-two delegates were present and 980 resolutions were sent in by the branches and E.C., 107 of which were carried. The total expenses of the meeting amounted to £770.

The following were the chief alterations effected at this meeting: Apprentices were admitted at the age of 18, and half-membership was abolished. Foremen were deprived of the privilege of becoming honorary members and honorary members were debarred from transferring to full membership after 50 years of age. Contributions were raised from 1s. to 1s. 3d. per week, levies being retained, and a somewhat weird arrangement was made which allowed a free member to pay a contribution of 9d. per week and be classed as a "B" member, receiving correspondingly reduced benefits; the idea being that some members might find the double State contribution too heavy to be able to afford our full society contribution in addition. Very few members took advantage of this provision, which was never worth the trouble expended on it. An addition to our Trade Benefit was made to fifteen-year members, who were granted continuous benefit of 4s. per week.

Several important alterations were made in respect of Superannuation Benefit. The qualifying period excluded the time the claimant was in receipt of Trade or Sick Benefit—in other words, he had to pay 20 or 25 years' contributions whilst working before he became entitled to this benefit. Another unique alteration was to altogether exclude from this benefit members whose private income from all sources exceeded the average rate of wages paid to our trade in the district. Pettifogging claims for Tool Benefit were discouraged by the adoption of a minimum of 10s. The Assistance Fund was put on a defined basis, its administration being as heretofore placed in the hands of the E.C. Important administrative changes were made by the excision of the rule relating to a triennial vote upon the locality of the seat of government and the selection of London as our permanent headquarters. The number of the E.C. were increased from five to seven and provision made for the election of a General Council, who should meet once in three years or oftener if required. It was also decided to appoint an Assistant General Secretary, and the working of Parts I. and II. of the National Insurance Act was entrusted to our branch secretaries, whose salaries were increased accordingly.

The delegate meeting recommended that we withdraw from the General Federation of Trades, which recommendation was endorsed by the votes of the members. It was also decided that our amended rules come into operation on January 14th, 1913, the date when our members became entitled to benefit under the National Insurance Act. In this matter, however, the delegate meeting had reckoned without their host; our rules were lodged with the Registrar of Friendly Societies in good time, and were returned with the information that they could not be registered as we had not complied with our own rules regarding alteration. We had previously received a few protests at the action of the delegate meeting in reducing the facilities for drawing Superannuation Benefit. These protests were quite out of order, but we had curtailed by two weeks the period of three months provided by rule between the issue of the amendment schedules and the holding of the delegate meeting. The reason for this curtailment was explained to, and unanimously approved by, the latter body, but it was quite sufficient to prevent for a time the registration of our

rules. The energy shown by the handful of our opposing members was remarkable. They went so far as to send a special delegation from Newcastle to interview the Registrar, and we perforce had to follow suit, the upshot being that we issued the rules to the branches without the Registrar's certificate. Seven months afterwards the Registrar reconsidered his decision and registered the rules as originally submitted to him. We were compelled to adopt the clumsy device of issuing gummed slips to the branches, so that such members as were willing to take the trouble of pasting the certificate in their copies of rules could be afforded the opportunity of so doing.

It was unfortunate that our recalcitrant members did not allow the matter to rest at this point; but with more persistency than discretion they issued a writ against the E.C. seeking to interdict a code of rules which had been in operation for several months, and which they eventually withdrew, paying a bill of costs which they could ill afford. It was under those untoward circumstances that our 1912 code of rules came into operation.

During this year the Associated Patternmakers of Scotland became amalgamated with our society, the actual date of the fusion being June 19th, 1912. Their institution and adhesion to our ranks is fully dealt with in preceding pages, and their accession resulted in increasing the number of our branches from eighty-nine to ninety. Our membership showed a substantial increase during the year, 702—excluding the 234 members of the Falkirk Branch—being admitted into our ranks; eighteen Trade Protection members being included in the larger total. Our exclusions were unusually heavy, 355 lapses being recorded. Our net gain in membership, inclusive of Falkirk, numbered 524, which constituted a record, our total numbers at the close of the year reaching 8,158.

Our financial record was quite satisfactory. Income from all sources reached £30,454, or £3 14s. 8d. per member, the highest amount contributed per head in our history, which does not necessarily mean that our members were called upon to pay the highest imposts ever exacted, the interest earned by our various investments being responsible for nearly 4s. per member of our total income.

Expenditure amounted to £21,031, or £2 11s. 6½d. per member; our gain for the year being £9,422, leaving us with a balance of £60,694, or £7 8s. 9½d. per member.

Our payments on account of Trade Benefit showed a considerable increase upon the previous year's expenditure and amounted to £7,540, or 18s. 5½d. per member. The bulk of this expenditure was incurred at the beginning of the year, and was due to the dislocation of trade caused by the miners' strike. Management expenses were unusually heavy owing chiefly to the delegate meeting, which cost each member 2s. They amounted to £3,896, or 9s. 6½d. per member, the highest proportionate cost for twenty years. Contingent expenditure amounted to £741, chiefly owing to the Coventry strike, whilst superannuation showed its steady and inexorable increase. Our Assistance Fund was called upon freely, the expenditure under that very comprehensive heading amounting to £1,386.

1913.

Trade was fairly good during the year, especially during the first four months, when we had no strikes in hand. After that quiet period we had trouble in plenty, with the result that our unemployed roll assumed quite abnormal proportions, which certainly did not represent the proportion of our members who were out of work through unpreventable circumstances. Our monthly average of unemployed members numbered 381, and our percentage was 4.6, both figures being less than the returns of 1912, when we suffered the industrial difficulties of other trades.

As a result of what might be considered fairly favourable conditions we had rather more than the usual number of wages movements during the year.

At Bedford we obtained an advance of ½d. per hour in two instalments, with a three months' interval; this in association with other trades. At Stockport we succeeded in raising the rate of wages to the Manchester level. At Warrington we raised the rate to 41s., those having above the usual rate receiving the full amount of the advance. At Coatbridge we commenced the usual wearisome round of the shops, but ultimately succeeded in bringing the three leading

firms together to consider our application for $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per hour advance, the object being to assimilate the local rate with that paid on the Clyde and in Edinburgh. In the end an advance of $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per hour was accepted. Our members at Stamford obtained an advance of 2s. and shortly afterwards succeeded in obtaining an advance of a like amount, making their rate 38s. per week.

At Halifax a joint effort succeeded in raising wages by 1s. per week. At Motherwell, after a long and wearisome dispute with one firm, we accepted an advance of 1s. 6d. per week, which made our rate 37s. 6d. for 49 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours. A joint agreement was made with the Manchester employers regarding the payment of the recent advance to young journeymen, which was regarded by these young men as quite satisfactory. We agreed with the Welsh Engineers and Founders' Association to accept an agreement which had been come to between the organisation and the A.S.E. An advance of 2s. was granted in two instalments, with a three months' interval, making our rate 41s. 6d. for 54 hours, the agreement to be binding until the end of the year.

At Dublin we succeeded in obtaining an advance of 2s. per week in all contract shops after lodging notices to cease work. A joint movement in Hull succeeded in obtaining an advance of 2s. from non-associated employers, their five years' agreement preventing the inclusion of the federated employers in their plan of operations. Towards the end of the year, however, they took steps to obtain a similar concession from the latter body.

One of the most important movements we had been engaged in for some years was the attempt of the London members to fix a rate of 1s. per hour. This meant an advance of 9s. per week to the majority of our trade. Before taking active steps to secure this concession we invited the co-operation of the A.S.E. and S.E.M.. The latter body gave us an assurance of their unconditional support, but that of the A.S.E. was qualified by the condition that we must only deal with non-associated employers, their agreement with the federated employers precluding any active measures, so far as they were concerned, which would violate their Provisions for Avoiding Disputes.

The position in London was peculiar. There were 747 employers in the district, of whom only 15 were federated, and in the same area some 800 society patternmakers were employed. As one firm employed fifty men, it follows that the vast majority of the shops were very small indeed. The demand was for a rate of 1s. per hour from Monday, 23rd June, and, failing a settlement, a withdrawal of labour took place on the 28th June, approximately 160 of our members ceasing work, mostly in the Erith district. At this time some fifty-one firms had granted our application. Four weeks afterwards that number had increased to seventy-nine, and 150 of our members had received the advance, a like number being on strike; these numbers gradually increased to ninety-three firms and 200 members.

The federated employers, whose men were all out, made no sign, and not having been approached by our side until the strike had been in progress for some three months, when a communication was sent from our General Office suggesting a conference on the ground that the non-federated firms had practically conceded our demand for 1s. per hour. The interference by the E.C. was resented by our local members, but if it did nothing else it cleared the air and showed us exactly where we stood, the employers replying that no negotiations would be entered into or conference granted until our members had returned to work on the terms prevalent before the strike.

This ultimatum had the effect of bringing the E.C.'s of ours and the A.S.E. together; the result of which was the taking of a ballot vote upon the question of a return to work and an immediate application to the federated employers for the recognition of our 1s. per hour rate. The result was that 49 voted for and 74 against returning to work. Negotiations were again opened up with the Employers' Federation with a view to a conference. In the meantime, a mass meeting of the men was held and some remarkably plain speaking was indulged in by the representatives of the A.S.E., who pointed out that their members in coming out on strike had not only violated the Provisions for Avoiding Disputes, but had ignored their own rules, and it was laid down with unmistakable clearness that whatever the members of the U.P.M.A. did, those belonging to the A.S.E. must

make up their minds for an immediate return to work. The result was that some 80 patternmakers returned to work in federated shops, leaving 40 on the streets from these shops.

A conference with the employers was then held, when 2s. in two instalments, with a five years no-change arrangement, was offered. This offer was declined, and at an adjourned meeting an unconditional 2s. was offered, and on being submitted to a mass meeting was rejected on a ballot vote by 164 to 70 votes—a quite natural result seeing that a majority of those present had already obtained the 1s. per hour rate. As the A.S.E. patternmakers were under definite instructions to return to work the bottom was knocked out of the strike, and it was little wonder that the employers refused to meet us again. They agreed to an informal conference, the result of which was a concession by the East London and Greenwich employers of $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per hour to bring them up to the London rate, which meant an increase of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. and $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per hour and a raising of the Metropolitan rate to 47s. 3d. per week. These offers were submitted to a ballot vote and accepted by 200 to 72 votes, and the strike, which had lasted twenty-three weeks, finished up on 6th December, about one-fourth of the men who came out on strike being left on the streets.

At Lincoln we showed our repentance of tying ourselves up for a stated number of years by joining in a general movement for an advance of wages. Our presence at the local conference was objected to by the employers. We justified our presence by stating that the employers had violated the agreement by "not paying the advance on the rates current when we sent in our application." We also alleged victimisation by one firm. Ultimately we offered to submit our claim for inclusion in the movement to Board of Trade arbitration. Two firms were willing, but the third refused, and as our position was really untenable we withdrew our application.

At Falkirk our members signalled their entrance into our organisation by applying for an advance of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per hour, this being really a continuance of a movement initiated a few months before to obtain Clyde and Forth rates. No offer being obtainable, our members ceased work on Saturday, May 24th, this being the first strike in which our Falkirk



DELEGATE MEETING, MANCHESTER, JULY, 1912.

members had been involved. Another novel feature about this dispute was that for the first and probably the last time in our history the moulders came to our rescue by refusing to mould any patterns delivered into the foundry after our members came out on strike, with the result that some 5,000 or 6,000 were locked out and were kept out for five weeks, when the intervention of the Provost of Falkirk resulted in their resumption of work. At this point we had a meeting with a sub-committee of the employers, but the best we could get was an immediate return to work at the old rates and the promise of a full conference to consider our application for an advance of 2s. per week. This was rejected unanimously by our members, and ultimately the employers had to bow to the inevitable and grant an advance of 1s. per week from the last pay in August and a further 1s. three months afterwards. All men were reinstated in their old jobs, and the strike terminated, as all strikes should, with no feelings of bitterness on either side.

At the beginning of the year we joined up with other trades who had members employed at the Aircraft Factory, Farnborough, for an advance. As we were paid at the same rate as other craftsmen we put in for an extra advance in order to establish a 2s. differential rate. As a result, one-half of the patternmakers received 2s. advance, a similar arrangement being applied to the other trades. Later in the year a joint committee was formed to deal with the many grievances of which the workmen complained, including a demand for the abolition of piecework and premium bonus and the payment of a minimum rate of 10d. per hour.

At Southampton the A.S.E. applied for an advance of 3s. per hour, rejected the offer of 1s. advance, with a three years' agreement, and sent in an ultimatum, which eventually resulted in a strike. The other trades—ours amongst them, and excepting the moulders—hurriedly decided to come into the picture rather than be left stranded in the shops, sent in their application and their ultimatum just in time to march out with the A.S.E. The Board of Trade intervened and were snubbed by the A.S.E., who explained that nothing short of 3s. would satisfy them; the other trades hastily acquiescing, a further conference resulted in 6d. per week additional being offered to men engaged on outside repair work. This was

rejected by a mass meeting, 180 voting for, and 611 against. The employers were again met, and the 6d. was offered to all workmen. This offer was also rejected on a pooled sectional vote, but was eventually accepted, when it was seen that no further offer was obtainable, by 529 for, and 133 against.

At Keighley a joint movement to obtain an advance of 2s. per week, with other concessions to young journeymen, was unsuccessful in obtaining any concession. Whilst at Worcester our members managed to obtain an advance of 1s. 6d. per week, we were not so successful at Stanton, however, where we failed to obtain any advance on a 33s. 9d. rate. At Stroud we came out on strike after an unsuccessful application for an advance of wages. Ultimately we accepted 1s. advance on condition that all members be restarted. This was agreed to by the employers with the reservation that, as they had work for only two out of six men, they would discharge the surplus of four after one day's work!

At Sowerby Bridge our members accepted an offer of 1s. per week advance, and at Chesterfield were more fortunate in obtaining 2s. in two equal instalments, with a three months' interval and with a five years no-change arrangement, which gave our trade a minimum rate of 40s. per week. A similar advance was conceded to our Rochester members, but with a six months' interval. At Newark a joint movement resulted in the largest firm granting an advance of 1s. per week on time rates from 20th September and a similar advance on 13th February, no change to take place for two years, dating from the second instalment. No advance was conceded to pieceworkers, who formed the great majority of the workmen, and our rate was raised to £2 per week.

When it was sought to apply this settlement to the remaining firms the largest, employing 517 workmen, hung back and refused to have any dealings with the joint committee. Our members being impatient at the slow progress, sought to liven up matters by refusing to work overtime, being under the impression that they would be backed by the remainder of the workmen. Their expectations were not fulfilled. Two of their number were discharged, the remainder, with the exception of three non-society men, promptly lifted their tools, and the general body of workmen

accepted 1s. advance, with a two years no-change agreement. All attempts to procure the reinstatement of our members were fruitless, and we had no alternative than to close the shop to our members.

A long-standing grievance in Liverpool was dealt with by a joint committee, who sought to enforce local rates upon a public authority, who employed a large number of workmen, and who paid 1s. below the standard. This movement was delayed owing to the number of trades concerned and the varied agreements they had with regard to notices. We have no record as to the ultimate result. At Ashton we succeeded in ending a long-standing grievance by assimilating the local rate with the rate paid in Manchester. It was a joint movement for 1s. advance to fitters and turners and 3s. to pattern-makers. The employers raised difficulties with regard to the strikers, who were only offered one-half of the advance conceded to our trade. However, this objection was withdrawn and agreement reached that in future Ashton should be governed by Manchester wages settlements.

At Loughborough our members stopped all overtime until their demand for an advance in wages from 37s. to 38s. per week was conceded. At Ipswich our newly opened branch applied for an advance of 4s. per week. They ultimately accepted 1s., which was applied for on behalf of our Colchester members. At Burton our members succeeded in raising their rate of wages to 38s. per week, whilst a general movement in Bradford resulted in an all-round advance of 1s. per week. At Cardiff the preliminary steps were taken to assimilate the rate of 41s. in contract shops with the 45s. per week in ship-repairing yards. Horbury, a one-shop town on the outskirts of Wakefield, obtained an advance of 1s. 1½d. per week, raising the rate to 37s. for 53 hours.

A joint movement in Derby resulted in a starting rate for young journeymen of 28s. per week, with 2s. further advance every four months until the standard rate was reached. Other questions relating to a revision of working conditions did not greatly concern us. At Nottingham a joint movement resulted in an offer of 1s. advance to our trade and the labourers. Naturally the other trades objected to being excluded from this offer, and the matter was eventually remitted to Central Conference. A similarly indefinite

termination to a general wages movement occurred at Leeds, where side issues were introduced which delayed a settlement until the 1st April, 1914, when an all-round 1s. advance was accepted.

Other questions which affected our workshop amenities was a proposal of the largest firm in Newark to introduce the one-break system, coupled with a 53-hour week—a reduction of one hour. Needless to say, the representatives of the joint trades declined any change, which was not pressed.

Our Govan members had further trouble with the pattern-making machine installed in the patternshop of the chief firm in that salubrious district. The custom was for a joiner to operate the machine during the night-shift. The matter was sent to the Employers' Federation, the result being an arrangement whereby each trade confined itself to its own particular work. At Leicester a joint movement to obtain a fifty-three-hour week did not appear to get beyond an interesting discussion.

During the early part of the year an attempt was made by Admiralty dockyard workmen to get out of the rut of periodical sectional representation of grievances, the workmen going to the extent of stopping overtime in order to secure some different method of dealing with grievances. The matter was subsequently handled by the Federation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades, who asked for: (1) Increase of wages; (2) creation of a central authority to deal with workmen's grievances; (3) victimisation. These questions were fully discussed with the chief officials at the Admiralty, and an impression was created that progress had been made; that feeling being tempered by the knowledge that any of the trades who could snatch an advantage by separate action would not hesitate to do so, which was precisely what all the trades, including our own, had been trying to do from time immemorial.

At Barnsley a firm asked their foreman to take the whole of the work on contract, and on his refusal they engaged a non-society man to do so. He attempted to introduce piecework into the shop, which our members resented by leaving in a body. At Dundee the fifty-three-hour movement was resuscitated, but without definite results. At Rugby and

Birmingham attempts were made to limit overtime. We were involved in a strike of woodworkers at an American firm engaged in mass production of motor-cars at Manchester, where our members were set on to make jigs for the motor bodies. Complaints were made at the action of our members by the carpenters and joiners, which were found on investigation to be justified, and instructions were given that they be withdrawn from all work which had been done previously by the men on strike.

At Sheffield a joint movement to limit overtime was made, but seemed to have gone no further than to elicit from the employers a pious expression of their intention not to make any further demand upon their workmen than the urgency and emergencies of their business demanded.

The need for a daily newspaper devoted to the Labour cause had found tangible expression by the establishment of the "Daily Citizen," which was instituted and run under the auspices of the Labour Party. From the first it suffered from lack of funds, and those who were responsible speedily found that there was all the difference between a section of the community being favourable to the foundation of a newspaper devoted to their interests and being willing to bear the financial burden of its issue. Appeals were made to the Trade Unions for assistance, and we, amongst others, took a vote upon an ultimate proposal that we invest 1s. per member per annum in the "Citizen" for three years. This proposal was carried by a majority of seventeen. When the votes were published it was found that one return was incorrect, and the correction turned the vote into a refusal. A further vote was taken and a reiterated explanation given that if it was in the affirmative the members would require to pay 1s. per annum for three years; the result being that by a majority of 300 our members declined to venture into the realms of what they evidently considered an exceedingly problematical newspaper enterprise.

The eight hours question occupied an unusually prominent position in current Labour politics during the year, the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress asking the affiliated unions to take a vote upon four distinct propositions, all of which we endorsed by

substantial majorities, the result being sent to the Parliamentary Committee, where they have since apparently rested.

A much more promising attempt to obtain a national reduction of hours in the engineering and shipbuilding industry was made by the Federation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades, with the co-operation of other interested unions, when, after repeated unsuccessful attempts, a conference was held with the Engineering Employers' Federation; a preliminary discussion resulting in the appointment of a sub-committee to carry on negotiations with the employers, of which your General Secretary acted as secretary. Several conferences took place, and although the shipbuilding employers declined to take part in the preliminary discussion, the movement was undoubtedly gathering force, and there seemed every prospect of our securing our eight-hour day without any reduction of wages when the crowning calamity of the great European War brought any proposals to reduce hours, and consequently output, to an abrupt termination.

During the year your General Secretary attended the Thirteenth Convention of the Patternmakers' League of North America by special invitation, authority for this delegation having been given by the recent delegate meeting. The chief object of this visit was to try and fix up an agreement for the mutual recognition of the cards of either society. It was a one-sided arrangement, as for every American patternmaker who came to this country, there would probably be 50 of ours who crossed the Atlantic. Their port of entry into the States was invariably New York, where naturally enough they at once sought employment, when they were met by the strongest opposition from the local association and an entrance fee exacted from them as foreigners by that organisation, which generally amounted to an impossible sum.

It cannot be said that our representatives to the convention met with much success. It was ultimately agreed that the Executives of the two organisations draw up a scheme of closer unity which should be submitted to a referendum vote. This was never done, other matters of infinitely greater importance absorbing the attention of our own organisation, and it is questionable if a mutual agreement for the

recognition of each others contribution card will ever progress beyond the stage of pious hope for a better understanding. Whilst on the subject of foreign delegations, a sombre interest attaches to a visit paid by your General Secretary to Germany in September, 1912, as a member of a Peace party, composed chiefly of Labour M.P.'s, an account of which appears in the then current Monthly Report.

It is somewhat surprising to note that, in spite of some 20 wages movements in which we were engaged, all of which were successful to a greater or less degree, that we added nothing to our average rate of wages, which at the end of 1913 stood at £1 19s. 8½d. per week. The reason was that several low paid districts were included in our tables, where we had no branches, so what we gained in comprehensiveness we lost in averages. It is interesting to note that one-half of the wages movements we were engaged in during the year were initiated and carried through by and for ourselves. We had two strikes of our trade during the year—London and Falkirk, and at Southampton we were involved in a prolonged and general turn-out, our strikes costing us nearly £7,000.

We were unusually successful in opening new branches during 1913, our total number being increased by five and numbering 95 at the end of that year. Our total admissions were the highest recorded and numbered 802, of whom forty were Trade Protection members. Exclusions amounted to 348, which was probably a record, our gain for the year being 319, leaving us with a total membership of 8,477. Our income was the highest both as regard amount and proportion, and amounted to £35,835, or £4 4s. 6½d. per member, this being nearly 8s. per member more than our members had ever been called upon to contribute in our history. Expenditure amounted to £31,441, or £3 14s. 2d. per member, a gain of £4,493 over the year's financial transactions, and giving us a total balance of £65,087, or £7 13s. 6½d. per member.

During this year we had our first experience of the beneficiary features of the National Insurance Act, our first payments of State Unemployment and Sickness Benefits having been made from the beginning of the year. This circumstance makes a comparison with the detailed expenditure of previous years extremely uncertain and difficult.

A considerable amount of our Trade expenditure was incurred in the payment of Strike Benefit, for which State Benefit was not paid, so it is probable that the £10,815, or £1 5s. 6d. per member, expended on the combined society and State Benefit does not represent a worse condition of trade than existed during 1912, when £7,540 represented our total expenditure on Unemployment Benefit. Our Sick Benefit—State and society—showed a much larger proportionate increase, £10,519 having been spent on these purposes, as compared with an expenditure of just over one-half of that amount the previous year. Management showed an increase of some £600. Contingent and Assistance Benefit amounted to £3,450, whilst superannuation showed its customary increase of over £200. Our accounts for 1913 are especially interesting, as they include a full year's expenditure under the National Insurance Act, and the result certainly was not so serious as many of us expected would be the case.

1914.

This year opened uneventfully. There was not the slightest indication that it was to be by far the most important year in the life of this nation or of the world, and that it would witness such a shaping of events as would upset dynasties and would be followed by such results as would inflict upon the nations of Europe a political economic and industrial influence which will, so far as we can foresee, last for many generations. War broke out between Germany and Austria on the one hand and Serbia, Russia, and France on the other, and a few days afterwards, on August 4th, 1914, we entered the conflict in accordance with the Treaty obligations to preserve the integrity of Belgium in case of a European war, the whole of the belligerents being parties to that "Scrap of Paper."

The suddenness and magnitude of the catastrophe in which we became involved created a panic which has never been paralleled in our history. Fortunately this country declared war during the August Bank Holidays, which were extended for a few days to enable the country to somewhat recover their mental balance. Further relief was afforded by the declaration of a moratorium, during which the legal machinery for collecting debts was suspended. This gave a further

breathing space and undoubtedly prevented the wholesale discharges of workmen. Other measures were taken to restore public confidence, and the industrial chaos caused by the total cessation of our export trade was gradually relieved by the placing of Government orders for munitions, a term which speedily covered the whole of the industries of this country; and in course of time the whole of our manufacturing resources were employed to the utmost possible limit in executing the varied requirements of the Government.

As the vast bulk of the national output was unproductive it was a case of feeding a dog with its own tail. But the industrial position was relieved—for the time being—and never in the course of our history were the manufacturing resources strained to such an extent as during the war period. At no time can we say that our members were subjected to any severe privations as the result of the war. At the end of July we had 383 members out of work, which was about the average for the preceding six months. Four weeks after we entered the war that number had swelled to 691, the highest point reached during the war. During the remainder of the year our monthly record of unemployed rapidly diminished, until in December only eighty-three members were out of work, and from that time onward our out-of-work members became a negligible quantity. It must not be inferred, however, that the absorption of our unemployed members was wholly due to their employment at patternmaking. Some 568 were wholly withdrawn from industry by reason of their having joined the colours; others transferred to shell turning, and other branches of engineering, aeroplane manufacture, and a variety of other occupations which proved more congenial and remunerative than their own trade. Owing to these ameliorative circumstances our records show quite favourable returns, our average unemployed being 350 and our percentage 4.1, both figures being more favourable than the figures for the previous year.

As may be readily conjectured, our various wages movements occurred during the early months of the year. Our members working in Wakefield associated themselves with other trades and obtained 1s. advance. A joint movement in Rochdale to obtain an advance of 2s. to all trades except ours, for which

3s. was asked, was remitted to Central Conference, when one-half of the advances asked for were granted, and accepted by a small majority on an aggregate vote. We had our usual trouble to induce the Woolwich Arsenal authorities to grant our enhanced London rate. After prolonged negotiations a rate of 46s. 6d. for forty-eight hours was accepted, and an intimation sent in by the A.S.E. and ourselves that no member of either society would be permitted to start under the local rate of 47s. 3d. per week.

At Warrington the whole of the trades came out from the largest firm in order to obtain Trade Union recognition, and after a few weeks' strike succeeded in their object. An advance of 2s. was obtained in Hull by the joint trades, and at Sheffield a similar advance was obtained, with a further 1s. at a six months' interval, with a no-change arrangement for three years. At St. Helens we accepted an offer of 2s. in two instalments, with a six months' interval and a three years no-change agreement, these being the terms generally conceded throughout Lancashire.

At Farnborough we pursued our wearisome task of trying to obtain a differential rate for our trade. Concessions were granted to one-half of the patternmakers, and ultimately we abandoned the attempt to improve our conditions at the Royal Aircraft Works by separate action, and joined with the other trades in seeking a 42s. minimum rate for engineers, with 2s. extra for patternmakers, 5s. increase on semi-skilled rates, abolition of piecework, and limitation of overtime to thirty-two hours per month. This ambitious programme was nipped in the bud by the outbreak of hostilities. An advance of 1s. per week was obtained by our members in Cowes, and double that amount was obtained in Wigan.

A protracted joint movement at Preston terminated by the acceptance of 1s. per week advance to the general body of workmen, with 2s. to our trade, the question having gone to a Central Conference, to which we vainly sought admittance. At Bolton our members decided to apply for an advance of 5s. per week, whilst at Bury we joined with other trades in seeking an increase of 4s. Local conferences of a somewhat farcical character were held, and naturally enough no progress was reported until the movements in the

two towns were consolidated and the lesser application agreed to. The settlement provided for a 2s. advance in equal instalments, with a six months' interval, no change to take place for three years.

At Birmingham we experienced to the full the results of disunity amongst both employers and workmen. There were two organisations representing the employers, whilst the workmen were similarly placed, the A.S.E. having kicked over the traces, followed by their obedient henchmen, the S.E.M. The applications sent in were for an advance of 5s. per week, and we stuck to the joint committee, although the vast majority of our members were governed by the A.S.E. settlement of an advance of 2s. per week, which was concluded between that society and the Engineering Employers' Federation. So far as we were concerned, the settlement ultimately effected with the Midland Employers' Federation gave the same advance.

A joint movement in Keighley for an advance of 2s. per week resulted in a strike. An offer of an immediate 1s., with another in three months afterwards (no alteration to take place for three years), was at first rejected and afterwards accepted; the non-union element beginning to drift back to work. The strike broke out again owing to the alleged victimisation of some of the local leaders, but the men resumed work on being assured that nothing of the kind was intended. At Blackburn we obtained the Bolton and Bury settlement, and, in addition, arranged for a loosing rate of 30s. for young journeymen, full rates to be paid in one year by equal quarterly instalments.

A joint movement at Barnsley secured an advance of 2s. per week, and at Huddersfield we, probably for the first time in our history, obtained an all-round advance of 2s. for apprentices, with a loosing rate of 26s. per week, full rates to be paid at the age of 23. At Reading our members received an offer of 2s., with a three years' no-change, or alternatively 1s., with a further 1s. in six months, the latter offer being obtained with extreme difficulty. Our members, however, decided in favour of the employers' first proposal.

A joint movement in London sought an advance of 8s. per week. We were invited to join, but asked for a written

guarantee that we must be included in any settlement. This was refused, and we accordingly held aloof. A joint movement in Leicester succeeded in obtaining an all-round advance of 2s. to mechanics and labourers having less than 23s. per week, with half that amount to those paid over that rate. At Liverpool a joint application was made for an advance of 6s. per week, half that amount being accepted by the trades concerned, whilst we took part in the initial steps in joint movements to obtain advances of varying amounts in Rugby, Derby, and Bedford, and on behalf of our own trade on the Clyde.

We had a slight tussle with the joiners at Rochdale owing to their encroachments upon our trade, and an agreement was made that where both trades were represented neither should touch the work of the other trade, but no restriction should be imposed when only one trade was employed, but where a workman was employed indiscriminately at either trade he should demand the highest rate of wages, which in this case happened to be the joiners' rate. At Birkenhead an unsuccessful attempt was made by the firm to curtail the usual quarter-of-an-hour cleaning time allowed on Saturdays.

At Aberdeen the joint trades succeeded in obtaining the Dundee settlement of the 12 o'clock Saturday, the hour being worked up during the week. On the Clyde we interviewed the employers with a view to formulating a code of working by-laws which should govern our trade in that district; hitherto we had been bound by the local rules of the A.S.E. Our representatives were favourably received, but the national position put a stop to our negotiations for a separate code.

Considerable progress was made with regard to the hours question. The difficult task of consolidating the Labour interests was accomplished, and a committee representative of the whole engineering trade was formed, the president of the A.S.E. being chairman and your General Secretary acting as secretary. Conferences were held with the Engineering Employers' Federation, when a demand was made for a forty-eight-hour week without reduction of wages. The movement was gathering strength and certainly promised well, when the outbreak of war put a sudden stop to negotiations, which, as has already been noted, did not include the shipbuilding employers.

A minor success, was, however, recorded in the Mersey district, where a reduction of hours in the ship-repairing firms to forty-eight in summer and forty-four in winter, without reduction of pay, was agreed to after a gentle stimulus had been applied to the employers by a stoppage of overtime. At Coatbridge a joint movement with which we were identified succeeded in obtaining the weekly payment of wages. At Newark a joint movement was launched dealing with improved overtime conditions, notices of discharge, standard rates of wages, loosing rates for apprentices, and other minor concessions.

The unsatisfactory position we occupied with regard to Central Conferences excited considerable attention during the year. Our wage movements were showing the inevitable tendency to become desectionalised, and we found ourselves willy-nilly compelled to associate ourselves with other trades in their attempts to improve workshop conditions. We had then, as we have now, full liberty of independent action, but that did not assist us one iota to better our special conditions of employment, and whether we acted as pioneers or came in at the cart tail, we obtained the same terms as were generally granted to contemporary trades. Whilst these movements were local we were allowed into the conference rooms and were granted the poor consolation of a hearing; but when, as was generally the case, the joint application was remitted to Central Conference we found ourselves out in the cold, and if we had any special claim to make we had to enlist the good offices of our A.S.E. friends. Our anomalous position created considerable dissatisfaction amongst the branches, which ultimately found expression in a resolution from Preston that we sign the "Provisions for Avoiding Disputes" in the engineers' 1897 agreement. The proposal, however, was lost, 682 voting for, and 916 against. A majority of our members apparently preferred to bear the ills they had rather than to fly to others they knew not of.

The passage of the Trade Union Act, 1913, was designed to facilitate the representation of Trade Unions in Parliament and on other elective bodies by allowing these organisations to impose levies, with certain restrictions, upon their members. Model rules were supplied by the Registrar of Friendly

Societies and distributed amongst our branches, and we, along with other Trade Unions, took a vote as to the acceptance of these ballot rules and their incorporation in our rules, the result being, in favour 1,683, against 615, their adoption being carried by a quite decisive majority; and the rules were at once registered. That, of course, was only a preliminary and might be described as an academic expression of approval of the principle of Labour representation. The real test was to come when our members were in a position to vote for or against making use of the operative clauses of the model rules. The voting was by individual ballot, the ballot papers being distributed through the branches, but were returnable direct to General Office. It was explained that if the ballot vote was consistent with the vote cast in the branches, the levy would not exceed 3d. per quarter, and that conscientious objectors would be afforded every facility for evading payment of the levy. Every effort was made to secure a record vote, with not very successful results—8,459 ballot papers were issued, of which 5,068 were never returned. The actual votes cast were: For, 1,045; against, 1,686; and 29 papers were rejected by the Scrutineers. So by the substantial majority of 641 we decline to give effect by, an insignificant payment, to a principle we had approved a few months previously. It may be noted that the final vote was taken in May, so was not influenced by the national calamity which overtook us the beginning of August.

A new departure was taken by the E.C. in the election of a General Council without the usual formalities of an application from any of the branches or an objection being taken to any decision of the E.C. The idea was to have a General Council elected in readiness to deal with any emergency which would render their assistance useful. They were not called upon during the year.

The various movements to increase wages during the year resulted in an increase in our general average rate of 1s. 0½d. per week, from £1 19s. 8½d. to £2 0s. 9d., and with two exceptions all our wages movements were taken in association with other trades, and with one exception, already noted, peaceful settlements were effected.

We opened three new branches during the year, but in no case did we break fresh ground. At the end of 1914 our branches numbered ninety-eight. Our admissions during the year were somewhat disappointing, 543 entrants being registered, of whom forty-two were Trade Protection members, exclusions numbered 264, our increase for the year amounting to 175, leaving us with a total membership of 8,652 at the close of the year.

An analysis of our membership rendered necessary under Part II. of the National Insurance Act shows that 7,563 of our total membership were actually working at our trade. This number included apprentice members. The difference of 1,089 is chiefly accounted for by our members with the Colours, who were transferred to honorary membership as soon as they left the trade.

Our total income for the year was the highest in our history and amounted to £40,505, or £4 13s. 8½d. per member; expenditure was £31,358, or £3 12s. 6½d. per member, giving us the substantial gain of £9,146 and raising our total worth to £74,234, or £8 11s. 9½d. per member.

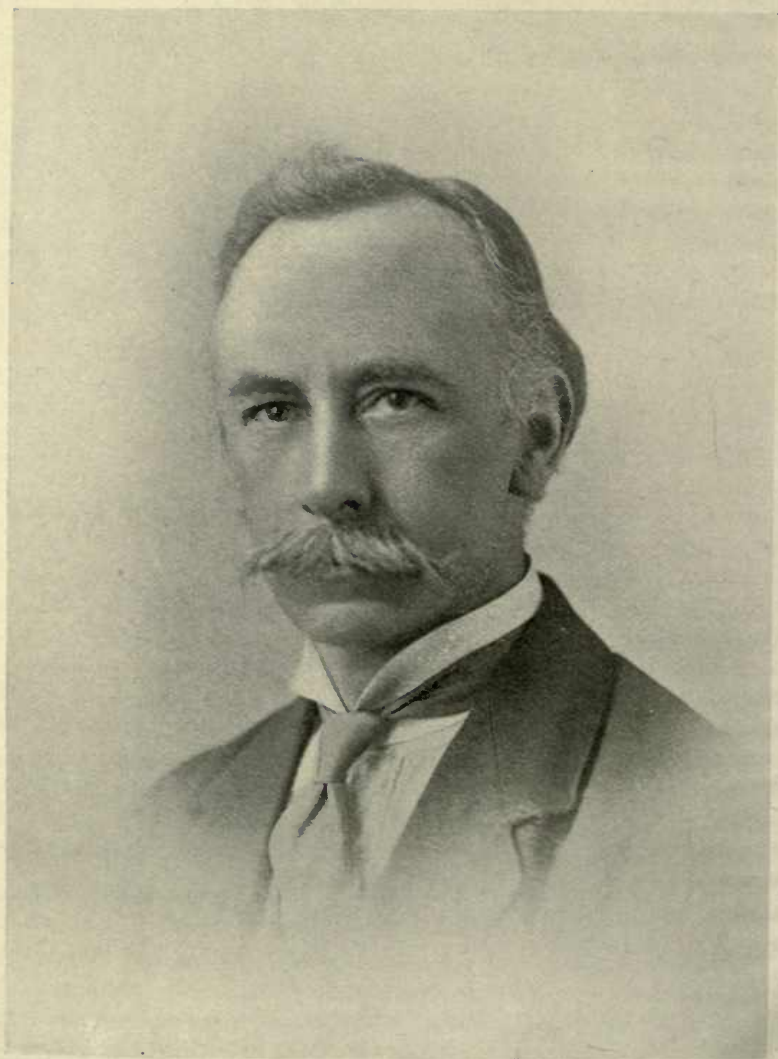
It will, of course, be understood that the record of both income and expenditure was swollen by the inclusion of State Benefit, the income amounting to over £1 per member, so the abnormal amount per member recorded as income by no means represents an unusual call upon the resources of our members.

1915.

The beginning of the year found this country in a state of disillusionment. We had been five months at war and the cheery optimism with which we had taken up arms had disappeared when we found our armies and those of our Allies being steadily pressed back. Reinforcements and the blunders of our enemies had afforded us some relief. We had recovered a considerable degree of lost ground; both armies had dug themselves in, and one and all had realised that we were committed to a struggle which would test the resources of this Empire to the last ounce. If we had been compelled to trust entirely to our own mechanical resources, vast and untouched as they were, we should have gone under without a doubt, as we were the chief source of

supply to the whole of our Allies with the possible exception of Japan, but we laid every neutral country capable of producing anything of service under contribution, and, in addition, Government factories for the production of munitions were built and equipped in this country with incredible speed and completeness. We were told that this was an engineers' war, and truth to tell, it really appeared that at last the engineer was coming into his own. He was consulted, deferred to, cajoled, and encouraged in a fashion which was as novel as it was unexpected, and the wonder was that throughout he maintained his mental equilibrium. All lines of demarcation were swept away in the national interest, and no hindrance was placed upon the free access of any workman to any trade for which he showed an inclination or aptitude. The Factory and Education Acts were abrogated in so far as their application tended to limit production, and looking back over a period of six years it is difficult to imagine anything which was left undone to adequately equip the Allied forces in the field and to sustain the civil population of these islands.

Whilst dilution in all trades was freely resorted to, it certainly reached its limit in the engineering trade, all the simple mechanical processes, and many which required a high degree of skill, being entrusted to unskilled and female labour, skilled mechanics acting as setters-up, supervisors, inspectors, and filling other positions of trust and responsibility under guarantee by the Government that these arrangements were temporary and at the conclusion of the war the dilutees would be dispensed with and pre-war conditions reverted to. The immediate effect of these arrangements were that production was stimulated to the greatest possible extent by the introduction of various systems of payment by results, the dilutees made the most of their opportunities and had little difficulty in earning wages greatly in excess of their mentors, and it is to the credit of the skilled engineers that they insisted upon the maintenance of their working conditions notwithstanding the fact that their loyalty meant the limitation of their earnings to a point which ranged between one-half and one-fourth of the weekly wages of those for whose work they were responsible. Such workmen as attained to these positions of responsibility did receive extra



A. WARDALE,
E.C. President, 1913.

payment, but it rarely exceeded 10s. per week, and the great bulk of the engineering trade had to content themselves with their pre-war earnings, plus whatever general advances were paid either by arrangement with the employers or through the Arbitration Court set up by the Government.

Our trade did not fare any too well whilst these extra payments were being made. No serious attempt was made to dilute patternmakers, firstly, because there was no occasion to do so, the trade being fully equipped; secondly, the only workmen who could have been usefully introduced into a pattern-shop—joiners—were fully and remuneratively employed at their own trade, and formed the great bulk of those engaged in aeroplane manufacture. The net result was that, whilst in pre-war times the average earnings of our trade were more than in any time-working branch of the engineering trade, during the war we were about the worst paid of the skilled time-working section of that industry.

Our relative position in regard to other trades was not due to any lack of effort on our part to obtain some of the special advances which were so plentiful at that time. The Government in order to minimise the danger of strikes had set up what was termed "The Committee on Production," to whom applications for advances of wages could be referred. It consisted of three well known and highly respected gentlemen, and was presided over by the Chief Labour Commissioner, and to the last it can be said that it had the esteem and confidence of the Trade Union movement. Our applications to this body and to the employers were incessant, and we certainly displayed a most commendable ingenuity in presenting the same application from every possible angle, but with no result, and neither during this nor the succeeding years did we obtain any consideration for the special claims we were continually bringing forward.

By far the most important measure—so far as the regulation of industry was concerned—proposed by the Government was that dealing with compulsory arbitration in relation to trade disputes. This principle had never been accepted by the Trade Union movement, although at recent Trades Union Congresses it had formed the subject of most interesting debates and undoubtedly had a large and growing number of

supporters. War, however, like adversity, makes strange bedfellows, and when the Government invited the Trade Unions to assist in the drawing up of an agreement which embodied the principle of compulsory State arbitration no objection to the principle was taken, although considerable diversity of opinion was expressed as to details. However, after three days' discussion, the Treasury Agreement of March 17th-19th, 1915, was drawn up and a Committee of seven workmen, known as the National Advisory Committee on War Output was appointed to see that due effect was given to the operative clauses of that agreement, the writer being elected Secretary to the Committee, which remained in office for over two years and had its office in the Ministry of Munitions, Whitehall. The text of that agreement will be found in an appendix (see page 21, March Report, 1915), and the gist of the document was that, failing a settlement of any dispute on war work, the "matter in dispute shall be dealt with" by the Committee on Production, a single arbitrator, or a Court of Arbitration, and in the vast majority of cases the first of these three alternatives was chosen.

It is not necessary to recapitulate in detail the various wage movements in which we were engaged during the year. Prior to the Treasury Agreement we were busily employed in attempting to make wages keep pace with the steady advance in the cost of living. We usually worked with the other trades, and met with a fair amount of success. When the Munitions of War Act was passed in May we had recourse to the Committee on Production under the Treasury Agreement, which formed one of the schedules of the Act, and in the hope that special terms might be obtained by separate hearings, we at times approached that body on behalf of our trade, but without success. The Committee on Production was out to increase production, and they lent a willing ear to the representations of the employers, who admitted we were underpaid; that the extra payments in our trade were conspicuous by their absence; that they were willing and anxious to pay us more if we would produce more, and the only way in which we could earn more was to adopt some system of payment by result, which would benefit both the country and the members of our trade. To this we had only one reply, that payment by result was not applicable to our

trade, and under no circumstances were we prepared to consider any change in our conditions as time workers.

No objection was ever taken by our members to this line of argument, and if there was any satisfaction to be derived by our sacrifice of earnings to the fetish of pure and simple time working rates we had it in all conscience. It may be noted, however, that we only applied our principles to our own trade, and many of our members obtained employment in unprotected occupations under systems of payment by result, which materially increased their earnings, and quite a number of such members of military age scurried back to their own trade and sacrificed their extra earnings in order to escape enlistment under the Military Service Act.

The result of our varied efforts to increase our wage rate was quite inadequate to meet the increased cost of living, which, according to the Board of Trade figures, amounted to 44 per cent. on pre-war prices. To meet this increase we raised our weekly wage rate from £2 0s. 9d. to £2 5s. 1d., an average of 4s. 4d. per member, or, approximately, 10 per cent. on our 1914 rates of wages. This, of course, was by far the largest increase in wage rates ever known to our trade, but under the circumstances its value in purchasing power left us in a much worse position than we were before food values increased in price.

With such a demand for labour as was experienced during 1915 it is not to be wondered at that our out-of-work returns represented a condition unparalleled in our history. The number of our unemployed members varied from fifty-four to 133, the average being eighty-one and the percentage .6, the lowest in our history; and it is questionable if an appreciable proportion of our members signing the vacant books were out of work for reasons over which they had no control.

Our increases in branches during the year was represented by a unit, which raised our total to ninety-nine. We admitted 582 ordinary and fifty-six Trade Protection members—a total of 638. Our exclusions numbered 159; our total gain in membership being 367, which gave us an aggregate total at the end of the year of 9,019.

Financially we had a most successful year. Our income from all sources amounted to £40,510, or £4 9s. 10d. per

member, which included refunds and grants from the Government under the National Insurance Act of £7,178. Our total expenditure amounted to £21,758, or £2 8s. 2½d. per member, which sum included £4,544 State Benefit. Our net gain for the year amounted to £18,751, which, added to our balance brought forward, left us with a total balance at the end of the year of £92,986, or £10 6s. 2½d. per member, the highest aggregate and proportionate amount in our history.

Usually our Unemployed Benefit furnished by far the largest item of expenditure in our yearly budget. During the year under review we spent only £2,310, or 5s. 1½d. per member, for the purpose of paying benefit to our unemployed members, this being the smallest amount per head we had paid since 1875; in amount it ranked with our year's expenditure for Superannuation Benefit. Sick and Funeral Benefit were about the normal and accounted by just about one-half of our total expenditure; whilst management expenses amounted to 10s. 2½d. per member—also about the normal cost of managing our affairs. So far as the financial affairs of our society were concerned, 1915 ranked as the most successful year in our history, but it cannot be claimed that we were equally successful in our chief object as a Trade Union, and that the improvement in the workshop conditions of our trade kept pace with our successes in building up and consolidating our organisation.

1916.

The beginning of this year found our organisation for carrying the war to a successful conclusion well developed and as efficient as circumstances made possible. All our engineering and shipbuilding establishments were fully controlled by the Government and were almost wholly engaged in the production of munitions for this or for allied countries. Other essential industries were in like condition, and it is no exaggeration to state that the entire industrial resources of this country were being strained to breaking point in order to meet the requirements of the belligerent forces.

The shortage of man power had been partially met by the introduction of some 200,000 females into industrial processes which hitherto had been regarded as the monopoly of

the sterner sex; a large proportion of the men employed in essential occupations had been enrolled as War Munition Volunteers. This allowed the Government the right to transfer them to any district where their services could be more profitably utilised in the service of the State. Under the Munitions of War Act workmen were not allowed to move from one job to another as their interests or their fancy dictated without first obtaining a leaving certificate—a cumbersome and tedious process, and as a matter of fact we had got nearer to industrial compulsion than we had ever experienced before or are likely to experience again.

The cost of living was steadily mounting, chiefly owing to the destruction of our merchant shipping by enemy submarines, who at one time were sinking at the rate of 300,000 tons of shipping per month. As these vessels were chiefly engaged in carrying food and raw material supplies to this country and to our Allies, it is little wonder that we sought to eke out our supplies by the development of our home cultivation of agricultural produce, and it is a remarkable fact that, notwithstanding the awful holocaust of our mercantile marine, this country never went short of essential food supplies; every possible restriction and economy was imposed upon us, but wholesome and sufficient staples were always forthcoming, although their price went up by leaps and bounds.

We, with others, sought to keep pace with rising prices by continual application for wage advances with but sorry results. Advances were obtained, but they bore no proportion to the increase cost of living, and the persistence and diligence with which a financial counterbalance to rising prices was pursued was as remarkable as the patience and equanimity with which adverse and inadequate decisions were received. The movements to increase wages covered the whole society, and, as usual, we varied the monotony of making separate applications by joining with other trades when we thought we could obtain better results by joint action. It really did not matter what we did or how we did it, the result was invariably the same, and still more remarkable in cases where we did not trouble to apply and a general advance was going, we received such concessions as were granted along with our applicant fellow workmen. None of our rights of application were taken

away or restricted; we could make what applications we wished to the local Employers' Federation; have our conference and even settle on lines of general concession previously granted. Failing a local settlement, application could be made to Central Conference by such trades as were entitled to demand this right, and as a final court an appeal to arbitration under the Munitions Act was the prerogative of any dissatisfied body of men, either society or non-society, and whatever decision was given by the Arbitration Tribunal under this Act was made to apply to all cycle applications from every quarter and from every contemporary trade.

The Government were somewhat alarmed at the number and persistency of the applications for advances in wages, all of which they had to shoulder, as they were practically the only customer of our engineering and shipbuilding firms, and in January they issued a warning to the Committee on Production, pointing out the "great increasing demands which were being made upon its resources to meet the needs of the war and the imperative need for economy in all forms of both public and private expenditure, and stating that in view of the present emergency any further advances should be strictly confined to the adjustment of local conditions where such adjustments are proved necessary." This memorandum had not the slightest effect in damming the torrent of applications, although it undoubtedly had a somewhat restraining effect upon the Arbitration Courts.

To give a detailed *resumé* of our various movements would be tantamount to furnishing a list of our branches. A few of these applications stand out from the general run and deserve a passing reference, chiefly as an example of how not to do it. The allied trades in Sheffield decided to apply for an advance of 6s. to journeymen and 3s. to apprentices. At the last moment the A.S.E. disassociated themselves from the movement and made separate applications. Naturally the employers turned both attempts down, and the question was remitted to Central Conference as a preliminary to its settlement by the Committee on Production. The same fate befel a joint application for an advance of 3s. at Derby. At the local conference the employers intimated that they were prepared to make an offer which they were sure would prove acceptable. At this critical moment a 'phone message was

received to the effect that 700 workmen employed by the largest firm had decided to take holiday on Whit-Monday and Tuesday. The projected offer was strangled at its birth, and although a meeting hastily called on the Sunday decided to cancel their former decision only one-half of the workmen put in an appearance, and the employers refused any concession on the grounds that if the men could afford to take holiday they did not require any advance of wages.

At Coventry, where piecework was general and big money the rule, the time workers obtained substantial concessions. As the result of a mutual proposal by the employers and workmen to the Ministry of Munitions our advance amounted to $18\frac{3}{4}$ per cent., or 9s. 6d. per week, and was back-dated eight weeks—this easily constitutes a record. Birmingham gave a fine exposition of the folly of divided counsels. The A.S.E. and S.E.M. asked an advance of 25 per cent. to skilled time workers, whilst the allied trades demanded 5s. per day advance. Both applications were refused by the local employers, and both sides carried their application to Central Conference, where, although we were affiliated to the Allied Trades Federation, our special claims would presumably be voiced by the A.S.E. However, it did not matter, as the Central Conference told both sides to go back to Birmingham and fix up a common application. This was done, and as was, and is yet, inevitably the case, the A.S.E. application was adopted and ultimately referred to the Committee on Production, when an advance of 3s. per week was granted. The allied trades, however, persisted in preferring the same application to the Midland Employers' Federation, and on their refusal to the Committee on Production, which body gave the same award as to the engineers.

At Manchester we identified ourselves with the joint trades in an attempt to raise wages, but growing impatient at the delay in getting to business decided to move on behalf of our own members. This apparently had a stimulating effect upon our quandom allies, who quickly decided to apply for an advance of 9s. We rejoined the joint movement, and the matter was ultimately referred to the Committee on Production, who awarded the usual 3s. The workmen were indignant at the inadequacy of this award, and came out in strike, remaining out for two days, when they returned to work

precisely as they had come out. We made a separate application to the Manchester employers for an increase of 5s. per week on apprentice rates, but were refused, the employers stating that they intended to continue making apprentices' rates subject to negotiations between individual employers and the apprentices concerned.

The rates paid to the craftsmen in railway shops had always been an exceedingly difficult matter to deal with, partly because of the well-known objection of the railway companies to deal with Trade Unions, but chiefly because the shopmen were in two camps bitterly antagonistic to each other. The National Union of Railwaymen, who claimed to have 60,000 shopmen in their union, had succeeded in obtaining an advance of 10s. per week to their members, excluding the shopmen on whose behalf they sought for the same terms as they had secured for their "traffic" members. The craft unions made application for 10s. per week advance to their members employed in railway workshops, who had already obtained an advance of 1s. from one-half of the railway companies. This was another case of divided counsel, and there is little to wonder at that the Railway Executive refused both applications and referred the applicants to the individual companies, who before the war would have probably played one section off against the other and delayed or avoided giving any concessions whatever.

At the outbreak of war, however, the Government had assumed control of the entire railway system, and an appeal by the craft unions to the Board of Trade resulted in an agreement that arbitration on wages questions must cover at one hearing all railway companies to whom claims had been made, that awards might be made retrospective, and that a date be fixed for a hearing to deal with the claim which had already received such cavalier treatment. The result of a deputation to the Board of Trade and a subsequent conference between that body and the Railway Managers was that all shop workmen over 18 years of age received an advance of 5s. per week, youths receiving half that amount. This settlement did not include the Great Central Railway, who were dealt with separately, or the Irish railways, who were not controlled.

The workmen engaged in aircraft manufacture launched a movement to secure a uniform rate of wage for the London

district as also to prevent the employment of females in this industry. They did not succeed in either of these quests, and adopted the quite original idea of making wholesale application for their leaving certificates. However, the Labour Advisor to the Government succeeded in bringing the employers and workmen together, when advances of from 2s. to 4s. per week were granted, which did something to assimilate the London rate, the objection to females working at aeroplane construction being dropped.

Our Belfast Branch, in common with other local unions, succeeded in obtaining an undertaking from the two chief firms in their district—both non-associated—that full rates be paid apprentices immediately they were out of their time. Naturally they made the same request to the federated employers, who refused to entertain it, and a reference to the Committee on Production was equally unsuccessful, who expressed their opinion that this question might properly be brought before the associated employers when conditions were less abnormal.

On the Clyde the usual division took place, the A.S.E., together with the trades most closely associated and dependent upon them putting in for an advance of 2d. per hour, and the joint trades with whom we were federated making precisely the same demand, both applications were carried to the Committee on Production and an identical award given to each body. Huddersfield went one worse. Hitherto a Joint Committee had acted on behalf of the general body of workmen with acceptance and a fair degree of success, and in accordance with the usual practice the preliminary steps were taken for an all-round application for 5s. advance. For some reason best known to themselves the A.S.E. backed out and decided to have a separate conference. Other trades followed suit, and a time-table was issued by the employers giving the hour for four conferences, with an allowance of one hour for each, our trade leading the way. As we were all informed that no advance would be granted, we refused to participate in the sorry farce and took our application direct to the Committee on Production.

The number and variety of the applications for arbitration had become so great that they became a positive nuisance and they constituted to a considerable degree a positive

hindrance to the output of munitions. It is no exaggeration to say that each week hundreds of workmen who should have been working were hanging about Westminster waiting to present their case for an improvement in their working conditions. Loyalty in the common interest was conspicuous by its absence, and whenever a particular trade saw, or thought they saw, an opportunity of snatching a concession they had no scruples in throwing their allies overboard and taking whatever course they thought would best serve their own ends. As a matter of fact, towards the end of 1916 wages movements had degenerated into a sordid scramble, in which it was a case of everyone for themselves and the Devil take the hindmost, and it was with a feeling of relief that the responsible leaders of the engineering and shipbuilding Trade Unions received an invitation from the Chief Industrial Commissioner to confer with the employers to "consider some form of procedure which would obviate the restating of claims for advances of wages which are practically identical in their nature and scope." Such an agreement was necessary if for no other reason than that the Arbitration Courts were being worked to death, and the wonder is that they with their staffs held up under the strain.

The vast majority of the cases submitted were for arbitration on cost of living advances, and it would appear that by far the simplest plan of dealing with these applications would have been the adoption of a sliding scale regulating advances of wages in accordance with a periodic ascertainment of the cost of living.

The whole of our branches received advances in wages ranging from 2s. to 4s. per week, the average advance being 2s. 7d. per week, our rates rising from £2 5s. 1d. to £2 7s. 8d. Up to the end of the year our total average increases had amounted to 7s. per week, or 16 per cent., whilst, according to the Board of Trade tables, the cost of living had risen 93 per cent. during the war period.

We were not so busy in seeking increased remuneration to altogether neglect looking after our interests in other directions. We had a squabble with the joiners at Bristol, which was referred to the Federation for settlement. They found that at one firm, whilst the joiners were on strike, our trade did admittedly joiners' work, and, further, that joiners

had done our work at this firm for years. The award gave patternmaking to patternmakers and the making and fitting of stern bushes to joiners, and as both trades had sinned against the other the costs of the inquiry were divided between the contestants.

The Preston Branch again raised the question of our adopting the Provisions for Avoiding Disputes in the engineering terms of agreement. They pointed out that we were then the only national organisation outside these provisions. This was an error. The English and Scottish Iron-moulders were outside. Upon a vote being taken, 708 voted for, and 713 against; so by the record majority of five votes we decided to remain as we were.

The question of the enlistment of skilled workmen in the fighting units caused considerable friction towards the end of the year, and a series of conferences were held between the representatives of the Government and the Trade Unions as to the protection which should be afforded craftsmen whose services could be best utilised in the national interest by their continuance at their respective trades. Proposals were made that dilution should be extended to firms wholly engaged on private and commercial work on the understanding that the terms of the Treasury Agreement of March 17th, 1915, contained in Schedule 2 of the Munitions of War Act should be observed with regard to such dilutants, and, further, that a guarantee be given to skilled men set free from private and commercial work that they would not be enlisted for general military service as long as they were required for munitions work or for technical units in the Army, and that in order to safeguard the interests of such skilled men local committees should be instituted, upon which Labour should be adequately represented. It was decided, in addition, that machinery be instituted to deal with allegations of victimisation by employers either in substitution or in debadging and with allegations of improper enlistment. This machinery consisted of fifty-five local and eight divisional bodies, with a central administrative body attached to the Labour Supply Department of the Ministry of Munitions. Mr. (now Sir) David Shackleton being appointed director, who was succeeded immediately after his appointment by the writer, the

“machinery” being known as the “Labour Enlistment Complaints Section,” and its object was to encourage the replacement of skilled workmen by dilutees and to protect such workmen from enlistment. As a society we were not greatly affected by this question, as dilution was never practised in our trade, and our members were, within certain age limits, fully employed at their own or other protected occupations. The Government scheme, however, was submitted to the members and accepted by 909 to 568 votes.

Our members expressed a good deal of sympathy with their superannuated brethren, whose benefit was quite inadequate owing to the increase in the cost of living, and a number of proposals were sent in asking that their benefit be increased. A suggestion that local voluntary funds be raised for this purpose was very coldly received, and ultimately the resolution was submitted asking for a special assistance levy of 1s. per quarter for the purpose of relieving any member in indigent circumstances. This vote was carried by the narrow majority of 13, 795 voting for and 763 against. The E.C. decided to distribute £20 per week and appointed a small committee to deal with the applications from the branches for the extra relief. Some forty members applied for assistance, but the levy was very unpopular, and in response to urgent objections from several branches, the E.C. took another vote at the end of the year, when by 909 to 568 votes it was decided to continue the levy. The whole business was another example of much cry and little wool. Ample funds were provided for our necessitous members, £699 being raised during the September and December quarters, and our expenditure for one quarter amounted to only £41 7s., about one-third of our superannuated and permanently sick members having applied for this extra benefit.

In connection with the question of man power in munition factories and shipyards, it was estimated that in May there was a shortage of workmen—mostly skilled—of 30,553. Fitters, etc., headed the list with 5,660, and we brought up the rear with a shortage of 43. This bears out our frequently expressed contention that during the war there never was a shortage of patternmakers, and if all patternmakers had been compelled to work at their trade there would not have been

enough work to go round, even if we leave out of consideration the 1,500 members who were serving with the Colours at this period.

We opened only one branch during the year, which raised our total to three figures. Our admission of members was quite satisfactory, new entrants numbering 638, included amongst which were 47 Trade Protection members; exclusions numbered 111, our gain in membership being 293, giving us a total of 9,312 at the end of the year.

Financially we fully maintained the splendid results shown during the year previous. Our income from every source amounted to £40,422, or £4 6s. 9½d. per member; expenditure was represented by the sum of £21,872, or £2 7s. per member, both aggregate figures being almost identical with the corresponding amounts for 1915. Our gain amounted to £18,549, which left us with a total balance at the end of the year of £111,535, or £11 19s. 6¾d. per member.

Whilst what might be termed the stable expenditure of the society was normal, sick showing a slight increase, management expenses costing £500 more than during the year previous, other items being slightly in excess of our usual expenditure, our hitherto chief financial liability—Trade Benefit—had dwindled to insignificant proportions, the average number out of work each month being 20, and the percentage .2. Our total expenditure amounted to £717, or 1s. 6½d. per member, a condition without parallel in our society. If the building up of a strong balance is a commendable feature of Trade Unionism we certainly have to thank the Munitions of War Act for assisting to that end by substituting compulsory arbitration for industrial conflict.

1917.

The war had now continued for two and a-half years, and had become so much a part of the nation's life that many regarded it as a permanent condition. To the ordinary citizen happily unaware of what was happening outside the censored information appearing in the Press, it appeared as if the contestants had reached a condition of stalemate which would last until one of the belligerents became so exhausted of both man and money-power that they would be reduced to the position of being willing to listen to proposals for peace if a

disinterested and responsible neutral nation could be found to take a step in that direction.

In April of this year the United States declared war against our enemies, but it was some months later before their actual intervention became possible. In the meantime, the sinking of our mercantile marine continued and our shipyards were engaged day and night in attempting to supply the gaps caused by the activities of the German U boats, whilst their contemporaries in the Air Service maintained a ceaseless warfare on the vulnerable points of the country, and every nerve was being strained in our aeroplane factories to cope with these marauders of the air.

In the meantime the cost of living steadily and remorselessly advanced, and the consequent applications for increased wages went up by leaps and bounds. Whilst the preliminary steps were an invariable application to local Employers' Federation, and from thence to Central Conference, this procedure, whilst in strict accordance with usage and with the engineers' terms of agreement, had become a complete farce. So much was this the case that the predominant society from the operatives' side—the A.S.E.—had for some time refused to carry any cases to Central Conference, and insisted upon short-circuiting the preliminaries by an immediate application to the Ministry of Munitions for arbitration, after, as was invariably the case, a local application had failed.

It was under these circumstances that the Chief Labour Commissioner requested representatives of the engineering and foundry trades and of the Engineering Employers' Federation to meet together with a view of fixing up an agreement which would prevent the casual and incessant applications for advances in wages which had reduced the work of the Arbitration Courts to a farce. After considerable discussion, the following agreement was decided upon and accepted by practically the whole of the engineering Trade Unions:—

“GENERAL WAGES APPLICATION.

“Memorandum of Agreement between the Engineering Employers' Federation and the Unions connected with the Engineering and Foundry Trades arrived at in February, 1917.

“It is agreed that, having regard to the special circumstances of the war, the following shall be the

principles upon which wages changes shall be arranged for the period of the war :—

“ 1. That existing agreements or practice under which applications for general alterations in wages are dealt with shall to that extent be suspended until the termination of the war or for such further period as may be agreed upon by the parties thereto. This shall not refer to agreements or practice whereby the wages of any trades in any district or department rise or fall with the fluctuations in another district or industry not covered by this agreement.

“ Nor shall it prevent the unions bringing forward for special consideration at the hearings referred to in paragraph 2 (a) the case of any district in which they claim that the rates of wages are unduly low or that the total amount of war advance is not adequate.

“ On the other hand, the Federation shall be entitled to bring forward for similar consideration any special cases they desire.

“ 2. During such period of suspension the following procedure shall be observed, provided the consent of the Committee on Production is obtained :—

“ (a) The Committee on Production shall, in the months of February, June, and October, after hearing parties, consider what general alteration in wages, if any, is warranted by the abnormal conditions then existing and due to the war.

“ (b) The award of the Committee on Production shall be an award under the Munitions of War Acts, and shall be of national application to all federated firms in the branch of trade concerned.

“ (c) The first award shall take effect in all districts on the first full pay day in April, and the altered rate shall continue until amended by a further award in accordance with the provisions hereof. Subsequent awards shall specify the date upon which the alteration awarded shall take effect.

“ The following memorandum was also agreed to between the parties :—

“ The Engineering Employers’ Federation and the unions whose signatures are appended hereto recommend to His Majesty’s Government that arrangements should be made whereby all employers in the trade or trades affected should be subject to the awards which may be made by the Committee on Production in virtue of the agreement hereto attached.”

The memorandum appended to the agreement became operative and put an end to the intolerable nuisance of the trades having to deal with obscure non-federated firms who attempted to evade general awards. Whilst the general agreement provided for periodic hearings upon a national basis, it did not preclude submissions being made to the Arbitration Courts for special hearings in regard to low-paid districts, which were dealt with after the general hearings by a special court which dealt separately with each application. In addition, other questions relating to workshop conditions could be raised at any time by any body of workmen, and these facilities to remedy grievances, real or fancied, were freely resorted to, and although the congestion at 5, Old Palace Yard was considerably lessened, abundant work was found for the various Arbitration Courts attached to the Ministry of Munitions.

As a means of increasing and accelerating the output of the munitions of war the Ministry of Labour made a strong effort to obtain a general recognition of a system of payment by results, and issued the following memorandum to the trades concerned :—

“ PAYMENT BY RESULT.

“ The following memorandum has been received from the Minister of Labour :—

“ As the Government has determined that it is in the national interests that a system of payment by results should be established, the following are the suggestions of the Minister of Labour for methods to be adopted :—

“ 1. The employer, where payment on time rate is in operation, shall, in writing, place in the hands of the

shop steward, delegate, or other duly accredited representative of the Trade Union or unions affected, a copy of proposals for payment by results.

“ 2. Any counter-proposals of the workmen should also be given in writing to the employer or his duly accredited representative within seven days from the receipt of the employer's proposal or proposals.

“ 3. In the event of no decision being arrived at within a further seven days, the matter must be submitted to an Arbitration Tribunal, consisting of a Chairman appointed by the Ministry of Labour, with two technical advisers, one of whom shall be appointed by the employer and the other by the workmen, neither of whom shall be in the employment of or be connected with the particular works involved. In the event of either side failing to appoint such technical advisers, then the Minister of Labour will make such appointments. The award shall be an award under Part I. of the Munitions of War Act, 1915, and shall be final and binding upon both parties.

“ 4. Where any trade can arrange a national system of payment by results direct with the employers, an Arbitration Tribunal will be set up similarly constituted as in paragraph 3 for the purpose of dealing with any complaint upon which no agreement can be arrived at, and the decision of the Tribunal shall be final and binding on both parties.

“ 5. It is hereby declared and understood that no mutual agreement or award in favour of payment by results shall prevent the existing time rates from being deemed to constitute a minimum wage.”

To which we made the following rejoinder :—

“ At their meeting last night the E.C. of the above society very carefully considered your proposal for the substitution of a system of payment by result for the present practice of time rates, and have agreed to the following resolution, which is being sent for consideration by the quarterly meeting of the Engineering and Ship-building Federation :—

“ “ That the Committee is of opinion that the only system of payment of wages applicable to our trade is

the time rate system, but if, in order to increase and accelerate the output of war work, it is considered necessary by the Government to adopt a system of payment by result, this Committee is of opinion that piecework is preferable to premium bonus.' "

The attitude of the Federation of Engineering and Ship-building Trades is indicated by the following extract :—

" This question was fully discussed at a recent meeting of the E.C. of the Federation, when the following resolution was agreed to, as against an amendment strenuously opposing the introduction of a system of payment by results into time-working trades :—

" 1. That the only method we can approve for dealing with the question of payment by results is by local conference, in the first instance, with the local Association of Engineering Employers' Federation and the Trade Unions concerned, in accordance with the provisions of the York memorandum.

" 2. Wherever payment by results is by this method introduced during the war period, the introduction shall be treated as a departure from Trade Union custom, and a record of each departure kept in accordance with the Munitions Act, and a guarantee shall be given for the restoration of time work conditions after the war."

Considerable indignation was manifested by some of our branches because the E.C. had agreed to work on a system of payment by result, which they had not done; they had simply expressed the opinion that if payment by result was inevitable, piecework was preferable to the premium bonus system.

A further communication from the Ministry of Labour showed a considerable change of front. They had evidently realised the impossibility of compelling time working trades to agree to a change, so they contented themselves by making strong suggestions that Executives should use their influence to induce their local bodies to negotiate with the employers in order to effect an immediate change to payment-by-result conditions. They also suggested as a basis that the local authorities should consider: (1) Whether a uniform system of payment by result should be adopted throughout a district,

or should be settled for each shop, or for a particular group of shops; and (2) if a uniform method is agreed to, what that method should be. Further suggestions were for the setting up of tribunals and other machinery for facilitating the proposed transition, which it is unnecessary to reproduce, as the whole scheme petered out, so far as the Government was concerned, and we do not know of a single time working trade which changed over to payment by result as the result of the well-meant efforts of the Ministry of Labour to speed up the manufacture of war material.

During this period the expressed attitude of our members to this question was one of undoubted hostility. At the same time, it must be understood that the employers had, with but few and isolated exceptions, made no serious attempt to introduce any system of payment by result into our trade. When they had made such an attempt, as at Barrow and Erith, our members had succumbed to the new order without anything more than the merest show of resistance. At the same time output bonuses had been introduced into their works by many individual firms, and where these extra payments excluded patternmakers our members, as a rule, succeeded, after strong representations had been made, in sharing these bonuses. The extent to which this was done can only be approximately calculated. No official objection was made by the E.C. to what was really a kicking-over the traces, each shop being apparently a law unto itself. Toward the end of the year, however, the Clyde district took the matter up and invited delegates from the shops in that district to express themselves with regard to the following ingenious systems of payment by result, which were apparently known throughout that district at that time: Bonus on tonnage, invoice value, flat rate time-keeping bonus, premium bonus, piecework, and gift bonus. Some hundred delegates attended the conference, and whilst one or two shops expressed themselves in favour of some of these forms of extra payment, the meeting almost unanimously decided to oppose bonus of every kind. In view of this wholesale expression of condemnation, the Clyde District Committee decided that in future "No member employed in the district must on any account enter into any agreement with employers for the receiving of bonus of any kind, and the Clyde District

Committee in future will not give countenance to any type of good time-keeping bonus." They further suggested that where our members were in receipt of a good time-keeping bonus that efforts should be made to "get the same merged into their time rates."

Considerable unrest had existed amongst the workmen engaged in the manufacture of aircraft ever since these engines of war had assumed first-rate importance amongst the various weapons of offence and defence which had been developed during the war. Some seven trades were engaged on the woodwork of these machines, and to secure something like uniformity and discipline with regard to working conditions a National Aircraft Committee had been created. In spite of this authority, as also of the Munitions Act, a considerable amount of "enficing" was practised, employers offering special inducements to workmen to enter their service, and as a consequence a condition approaching chaos existed as to the industrial position of the skilled workmen engaged in this industry.

To regularise these conditions as much as possible an agreement was entered into between the Ministry of Munitions and the National Woodworkers' Aircraft Committee on October 30th, 1917, the chief points of which were, that the highest minimum rate paid to skilled workmen on aircraft be the minimum rate paid to these workers in each district where the industry was carried on, but in no case had the minimum rate to be less than 1s. per hour. Skilled wood-cutting machinists received 1d. per hour additional. The ordinary working week to consist of fifty-three hours, except where less than that number of hours was being worked, and overtime rates were fixed on much the same basis as existed in the engineering trade. We were associated with this agreement as members of the Aircraft Workers' Committee.

At this time the famous order was issued giving skilled time workers (engineers and moulders) a bonus of $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on their earnings, "which shall not alter or become part of their time rates." This increment was paid from the first full pay after the 12th October, and it is safe to say that no order dealing with the remuneration of munition workers had such

far-reaching results, or was the cause of such bitter recrimination and controversy as was this order. It is probable that we had more to do with the genesis of the movement leading up to this order than any other trade organisation. As has already been noted, we were about the only skilled trade to whom none of the "plums" which were being so plentifully scattered fell. It was not for the want of trying. Time after time we represented our special claims before both employers and the Arbitration Courts but without avail. We received what was generally conceded, neither more nor less, and it was evident that unless we could evolve some other point of attack we were simply beating the air, so during the later hearings of 1916 your representative applied in general terms that special consideration be given to skilled time-workers who from the nature of their employment were unable to increase their earnings by any system of payment by result.

The employers invariably opposed these special demands on the ground that no skilled workman was precluded from increasing his earnings because his particular calling was unsuitable for a system of payment by results, and they were prepared to apply such a system to any and every trade, and not only increase the earnings of such workmen, but what was of infinitely greater importance increase and accelerate the output of munitions. This was quite an effective rejoinder, which prevented us making any headway with the Arbitration Courts, but it had the result of putting our contemporaries on a new track, and they also hit upon the astute plan of ignoring employers and the Committee on Production altogether and presenting the new point of view direct to the Minister of Munitions, with the result that considerably greater concessions were made than had ever been asked for or expected. It is quite certain that had the big battalions not intervened no special consideration would have been given to skilled time-workers. If the authorities ever thought for a moment that this concession would or could be limited to the trades as specified in the order they were soon undeceived, as the Ministry of Munitions were inundated with demands that this concession should be extended to all sorts and conditions of munition workers. The pieceworkers, led by the workmen employed in shipyards, joined in the hunt and

succeeded without much delay in obtaining an order granting an equivalent advance of $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on their total earnings. All extensions of the original order were originally granted by the Ministry of Munitions, but the volume and variety of the claims became too great to be dealt with by a sectional department, and the whole business was handed over to the Committee on Production, who certainly could not be accused of a niggardly interpretation of their powers in respect of the extension of the order. It is probable that we as a trade benefited less by this measure than any other trade; both time and piece percentages were paid on total earnings, and as our rates as a rule were not increased by the usual financial embellishments so common at that time, our percentage of $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. was proportionately limited in its application to patternmakers.

It is worthy of note that only one attempt to deal with the hours of labour was made during the year, the joint trades in Huddersfield fixing up an agreement with their employers for a reduction of hours from 54 to 50, with the one-break, but without any reduction of wages.

At the instance of the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress a strong effort was made to reconcile the differences between the Railway Shops Organisation Committee of Craft Unions and the National Union of Railwaymen. A draft agreement between the two bodies was prepared, the chief feature of which was the formation of a Joint Committee consisting of one representative from each of the craft unions, with six delegates from the N.U.R., who would deal with all general questions regarding wages, hours, and conditions of employment. Craftsmen were to have free choice of their union, the agreement to run for three years. These proposals were discussed on May 22nd, 1917, and were relegated to the various E.C.'s, where presumably they are still under discussion.

The question of dilution on private and commercial work was raised towards the end of the year, and by 57 for and 1,248 against the society reversed its attitude towards this question. It does not appear that we were threatened with dilution, so the matter appears to have been one of academic interest only, as the few females who were brought into three

or four patternshops did not appear to have been employed at constructive patternmaking.

A vote of the members was taken upon the propriety of holding a Council meeting, as also of affecting a complete alteration of rules, both proposals being carried.

By far the most important administrative incident of the year was the resignation of Bro. Mosses from the General Secretaryship of the society, which became effective from the beginning of May, after thirty-three years service in that capacity. His resignation of that position was a purely personal question, and it probably never occurred to any member that it was the business of anyone to inquire why an official filling an assured and congenial position for the greater period of his effective working life should voluntarily relinquish that position further than to quite erroneously assume that he wished for an easier and more lucrative position, and, so far as the society is concerned, reasons for his resignation may well stand at that. As will be readily conjectured the severance of the writer of this narrative from a leading participation in the events he has to chronicle and his dependence upon hearsay evidence and written report makes his task infinitely more difficult than when he was epitomising facts of which he had intimate personal knowledge.

The change in the General Secretaryship was made the occasion to separate the General Office from the Secretary's residence, a course which the increase in our membership fully justified, and which terminated an arrangement which had been in existence for forty years.

The average increase in our members' wage rate is far and away in excess of anything ever experienced in our trade, although it does not quite come up to the figures shown in the tables in our Annual Report. The correct figures show our average rate should be £3 2s. 6d., as compared with a rate of £2 7s. 8d. at the end of 1916, an increase of 14s. 10d. Our increase during 1916 was 2s. 7d. Our total increase since the end of 1914 amounted to £1 1s. 9d., or a trifle over 50 per cent., which was by no means an equivalent to the increase in the cost of living.

We added only one branch to our numbers during the year, our total number at the end of 1917 being 101. Our admission of new members exceeded the numbers of the year previous by 215, and numbered 853. Exclusions were 118; and our net gain of 693 left us with a total membership at the end of the year of 10,005.

Our financial transactions easily constituted a record. Our income amounted to £43,049, or £4 6s. 1½d. per member, almost the same proportionate revenue as for 1916. Expenditure amounted to £22,300, or £2 4s. 8½d. per member, being 2s. 4d. per member less than the year previous. The net gain appearing in our tables amounts to £22,956, giving our total balance at the end of the year as £134,491, or £13 8s. 9d. per member. The result is chiefly attributable to the practical extinction of our Trade Benefit Section. Our average monthly unemployed was nine, and our percentage of unemployed members was represented by the negligible figures—.09. Nineteen was the highest number shown on our books, whilst on two occasions we had only two members returned as being out of work. Our expenditure was on a corresponding scale. We only spent £247, or 5½d. per member, the lowest in our history since 1873, when very few of our members had qualified for this benefit. Our sick expenditure showed a substantial decline of £1,000 over the previous year's figures, the decrease representing 3s. 8d. per member. It is quite evident that many members who could easily have qualified for Sick Benefit "stuck" it during this stirring period and remained at work when at ordinary times they would have declared on Sick Benefit. Management expenses showed the enormous increase of £1,822 in the aggregate, and of 1s. 6d. per member, reaching the high level of 12s. 5½d. per member. Superannuation Benefit cost £22 less than during 1916, a most uncommon experience in this or in any other society. The reasons were probably the same as accounted for our reduced expenditure on Sick Benefit. Assistance outside the statutory benefits amounted to £1,629, or 2s. 8d. per member.

1918.

The beginning of this year found the national and industrial position, if possible, more acute than ever. The war dragged its weary way along without any apparent indication that it would ever end. March witnessed a great German offensive, our forces being driven back for miles, and great captures were made from us of men and material. When this offensive—which we did not know at the time was a last desperate effort—was at its height it looked as if nothing could prevent our armies being driven into the sea, or at least so restricted in area that they would not have sufficient space in which to manoeuvre. However, the wave spent itself. Reinforcements were rushed to the front; the loss of munitions and equipment was replaced. The Americans were by that time an effective fighting force, and were assigned a definite position in the line. The military command was unified and placed under the direction of one man, and the enemy's advance was checked, and after a brief rest a successful counter offensive was developed on every front. The retreat of our adversaries became a rout, and on November 13th the Germans accepted the fifteen points upon which the cessation of hostilities was based, an armistice was signed, and the war, which had been waged for four years and four months, ended in the complete defeat of the Central Powers.

Whilst the efforts and sacrifices of our gallant troops have never been equalled in history, the efforts of their comrades in the workshops were just as strenuous, and had there been any slackening at home all the gallantry and determination of our men in the field would have been powerless to ward off disaster and eventual ruin to this and our allied countries.

Our workshops had been run to what was considered their fullest extent. The crisis in March demanded that they be still further exploited, and it is no exaggeration to state that during the greater part of 1918 the output of munitions in this country was stupendous, and almost the last ounce of energy and productivity was extracted from the men and the machines engaged in the manufacture of munitions.

That the seriousness of the position was appreciated by the responsible officials of the Trade Unions chiefly concerned with shipbuilding and engineering is evidenced by the fact

that the Federation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades and the National Advisory Committee on War Output, with both of which organisations we were closely connected, issued an appeal to the trades pointing out the efforts Germany was making to sink our shipping, indicating the success of these efforts and the results which follow their continued success, and making a strong appeal for still further efforts to cope with the submarine menace by building light, fast craft capable of capturing or destroying enemy submarines as also of replacing the cargo vessels which had been sunk whilst conveying food and munitions. The appeal concluded: "Let us show that the determination of the workers of this country is such, and their power of producing first-rate work in the shortest possible time is such, that this country cannot be starved by any means the Huns can devise or in any length of time they like to specify."

During the latter part of January, 1918, the Ministry of National Service held a series of conferences with the representatives of the Trade Unions on the man-power question. Our representation was limited to three members, but the E.C. decided, in view of the importance of the question, that all should attend. The gist of the statement put forward by the Government was that owing to the withdrawal of Russia from all military operations and the failure of the Italians to maintain their positions some 1,600,000 enemy forces could be released for service on the Western Front, and it was stated that we would have to furnish nearly half-a-million men to maintain our various fighting fronts in Europe during 1918. For that purpose the Schedule of Protected Occupations had been revised, and the age at which protection should be afforded to the most highly protected skilled workmen was raised to 23 years, other sections being raised to various higher ages. The assent of the unions was not asked to these changes, but every information as to the release of workmen for military service in protected occupations was given.

It was at this time when the nation was fighting for its life that the E.C. thought the occasion opportune to give expression to their views upon the national situation, which is indicated by the following resolution: "That this mass meeting of (Manchester) patternmakers demands that the

British Government enter into immediate negotiations with the belligerent powers on the basis of self-determination of all nations, no annexation, and no indemnities. Should such action demonstrate that German Imperialism is the only obstacle to peace, we express our determination to co-operate in the prosecution of the war until these objects have been achieved. Failing such action on the part of the Government, we pledge ourselves to act with the organised workers of Britain in resisting the man-power proposals of the Government. We further demand adequate Labour representation of all countries on the proposed International Conference in order to ensure a people's peace."

The E.C. decided that this resolution should be brought as far as possible before the whole of the branches, and that they should attend and address such meetings. The first meeting was held in Manchester. Then the West Riding of Yorkshire was visited. London had its meeting. The visit to the North-East Coast was not so successful, the members there giving the fullest support to the Government's proposals, but the Clyde amply atoned for this faltering by advocating a direct down-tools policy, which, however, they subsequently modified. These pilgrimages do not appear to have extended beyond the districts already named. The E.C., however, pronounced their visits a decided success, and as they considered the allowances allowed by rule inadequate, passed a resolution augmenting both their lost time and maintenance expenses, and in view of the tremendous thrust on the Western Front by the Germans refrained from "pressing home the resolution which found so much support a month previously."

In the early part of the year considerable dissatisfaction existed amongst aircraft workers because a number of employers had failed to observe the national agreement with regard to wages, hours, and overtime allowances. Representations were made to the Ministry of Munitions, and that Department had promised the immediate issue of an order giving effect to the most important provisions of the agreement of 30th October, 1917, and promised to control such firms as were engaged in the aircraft industry that had hitherto been uncontrolled.

A delegate meeting of representatives of the workmen engaged in this industry from thirty-nine districts passed

a resolution in favour of "a complete cessation of work by woodworkers on aircraft at mid-day on Saturday, 9th February, unless in the interval the order is issued." This gave the Government eight days' grace, and on the appointed day the order was issued, which apparently satisfied the workmen engaged in this important industry. The Ministry retained the right to interpret the directions contained in the order (No. 187) and emphasised the fact that it should not continue in force after the termination of the present war.

Most of our members had experienced the unique experience of qualifying for the payment of income tax. Very naturally, they strongly objected to pay more than they could help, and the only way of evasion was by means of seeking "exemptions." Whilst every effort was made through the General Office to obtain as generous allowances as possible, individual members dealing with their local employers proved most successful, their arrangements being ultimately accepted by Somerset House and made generally applicable to our trade. An exemption of 3s. per quarter for Funeral and Superannuation Benefits on the basis of life assurance premiums was granted without difficulty, and a further allowance of £4 per year was made for the upkeep of tools and overalls.

The question of Labour representation was again raised at the beginning of the year, and the model rules were submitted to a ballot vote in May. The vote was returnable, as before, direct to General Office, 2,405 out of a membership of 10,000 members voting, the result being 1,689 for, and 711 against; five ballot papers being spoilt. The rules were immediately operative, and members were advised to attach the copies with which they had been supplied to their rule books. The rules are now incorporated in our current code—Rule 27: "Political Fund" and they provide for the payment of candidates to Parliament or any other public body, together with all expenses in connection with such candidature from a fund raised by an abstraction from each member's contribution of 3d. per quarter, except such as claimed exemption from such indirect payment to this fund, this procedure being authorised by a subsequent vote, 1,579 voting for and 426 against. The trifling remission of contributions made to objecting members made this provision of the rule chiefly

sentimental, and it is scarcely to be wondered that our conscientious objectors numbered only 337. Other chief features of our Political Fund rule were quite superfluous safeguards against either a member or an intending member being penalised in any way because of his political views, or want of them.

A meeting of the General Council was held during April, when 141 items were placed upon the agenda. Many of them were practically identical in principle and one ruling covered quite a number. An interesting item was an application from 130 Australian patternmakers for authority to open a branch in the Commonwealth, which the E.C. decided they had no power to grant. The Council, however, agreed to recommend the application to the consideration of our members, who, however, do not appear to have troubled in the matter. The question of piecework and bonus had deservedly due consideration, the existence of which in our trade was admitted.

On aircraft work our members were instructed to act strictly in accordance with the findings of the National Aircraft Industry Committee, and so far as our own trade was concerned instructions were given that in all cases of a departure from time-working systems particulars should be sent to General Office so that such departure might be registered with the Ministry of Munitions with a view to the restitution of purely time-work conditions at the conclusion of the war. It would have been interesting to know how many of such changes in workshop practice were actually recorded.

It was decided to substantially increase all officers' salaries, and this could not be done without an alteration of rule. The subterfuge was adopted that the increase should be charged to Assistance Fund. The increase to such officers as were not paid per member was generally 100 per cent., and as an additional encouragement in well-doing it was further decided that when meetings exceeded two hours in duration a further allowance of 1s. 6d. be made for refreshments to all Executive, District, Branch, and Joint Committee meetings, provided the extra time was not less than one hour. Other matters dealt with were of an administrative character and of little interest in view of the

forthcoming alteration of rules. By a vote of the society the advances in officers' salaries was agreed to, and it was further agreed to be fully represented at the Trades Union Congress, five delegates to attend instead of two as heretofore.

In connection with the training of disabled sailors and soldiers, our trade was scheduled as one to which these men could be admitted, and it is curious to note the physical requirements laid down by the Government to such trainees. "The use of both hands and arms is required. The loss of one or two fingers would not disqualify a man, but he must have full use of his thumb. He must be able to stand continuously at his work and move about freely. Good eyesight is required, but the loss of one eye would not necessarily debar a man from taking up this trade." Payments ran from 27s. 6d. during the first six months to 57s. 6d. for the sixth six months. In addition, he received his pension during the latter 18 months of his training and a bonus of 5s. per week was paid for the first similar period at the conclusion of his three years' training. There is no record of the number of men who entered our trade under this scheme, but they must be very few.

The question of bonus payments to our trade arose in a very acute form during the year. As a society we had condemned any system of payment by results with a consistency and emphasis which was indicative of sincere conviction. At the same time we were being left woefully in the rear regarding our earning capacity, and had frequently demanded from employers and arbitration authorities special advances on these rates, at least equivalent to the various bonus payments which were being so generally paid to contemporary trades. These applications had been invariably turned down, the refusals being usually accompanied by an invitation to accept some system of payment by result, which we just as consistently refused to even discuss. But an official disclaimer does not always carry weight with the rank and file, and it is not to be wondered at that numbers of our members accepted an output bonus based on the production of the whole establishment, in many cases requesting to be made participants in this or a similar additional addition to their wages, and which certainly was a violation of the official attitude of the society

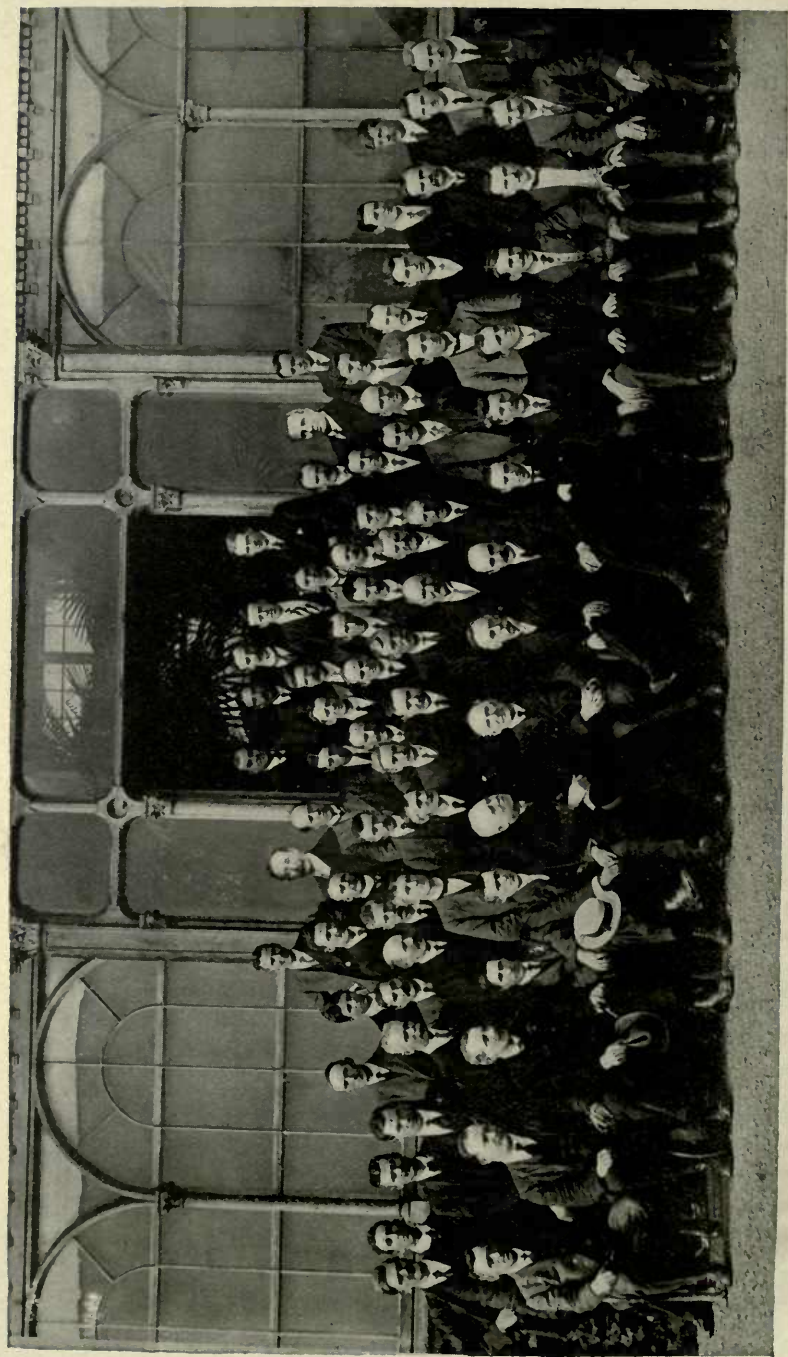
to any other system than plain time rates. This tampering with the sacred principles we had laid down as immutable and inviolable caused a considerable degree of friction amongst those of our members who were confined to purely time rates. Whether from a feeling of righteous indignation or jealousy it would not be profitable to examine; but the feeling became so strong that the E.C. took the unprecedented step of asking the society to vote upon a proposal they made that a national conference of delegates be held. There was no such authority recognised in our rules, but by 1,653 to 468 votes the members decide to authorise such a meeting. The conference was composed of the E.C., General Council, presidents and secretaries of District Committees, together with the secretaries of a few branches which appeared to be specially interested. The meeting, which cost £164, was held in Leeds on 1st and 2nd November, and so far as the bonus question was concerned, the delegates appeared to have bravely marched up the hill and just as gallantly marched down again, nothing effective being done to either end or mend the system. They, however, dealt with the wages question, and decided to make immediate application for a national increase of 50 per cent. on time rates, and elected a National Committee of three each from the E.C. and General Council, and one from each District and Joint Committee to carry the movement through.

Application for the proposed advance was duly made, and the employers at once agreed to meet the National Committee. The conference was held in York on December 12th, but, as might have been expected, the result was laconically stated: "After discussion, parties were unable to arrive at a mutual recommendation." The discussion, as might have been expected, turned upon the question of payment by result, and at its conclusion the National Committee decided to take a vote (1) upon enforcing the demand for a 50 per cent. increase in wages to the extent of withholding our labour, and (2) should the Committee be empowered to discuss the question of payment by result with the employers' representatives? The latter question will be dealt with in its proper sequence, but the voting upon the enforcement of a 50 per cent. increase resulted in 1,336 voting for, and 1,415 against. A majority of the members voting, evidently realising

that no special general advance was obtainable by our trade except in conjunction with the general body of the engineering and foundry trades, had already agreed to send our periodic application for advances to the Committee on Production and the Interim Court of Arbitration through the Federation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades, and any application we made was merged in the general demand made by that body on behalf of the affiliated trades under the February, 1917 agreement, although each separate trade dealt throughout with the special hearings on behalf of under-paid districts.

The position at that time was both interesting and peculiar. Four separate organisations sent in their various demands at the four monthly hearings—the A.E.U., the Federation, Moulders, and the General Workers—and whilst the two latter bodies persevered with their original applications, the Federation found it desirable and politic to synchronise their demands with those of the A.S.E., who invariably took the leading part in the proceedings. These details of procedure, however, had not the slightest influence upon the Arbitration Courts, whose findings showed no discrimination between the workmen's organisations

By far the most important industrial movement of 1918 was the reduction of the hours of labour in the engineering and shipbuilding industry from fifty-three and fifty-four to forty-seven hours per week, the consequent introduction of the one-break system, and the abolition of the inhuman practice of a 6 a.m. starting hour. For at least twenty years before the outbreak of war every labour organisation had been advocating an eight-hour day. In our own industry attempts more or less spasmodic had been made to reduce the hours of labour, our chief opponents being ourselves. The skilled unions would have no truck with those representing unskilled labour. The A.S.E. would not act with the Federation, and the latter body was impotent without that organisation, and the employers had nothing to do except to sit tight and refuse to negotiate with any organisation which did not represent the whole industry, an attitude which no one can reasonably blame them from exploiting to the utmost extent. This they did so successfully that not until a few weeks before the outbreak of war were the workmen successful in welding



DELEGATE MEETING, BIRMINGHAM, 1919.

together their common interests by temporarily burying their paltry differences.

When this point was reached a conference with the employers was speedily arranged, followed by a second, when some progress was manifest, for whilst the employers were adamant as far as the eight-hour day without reduction of wages was concerned, it was evident that they were prepared to make some concession, probably a fifty-one-hour week, with one break. However, the outbreak of war put an end to negotiations, which it was mutually agreed should be resumed immediately on the termination of hostilities. This agreement was carried out with a promptitude which was positively startling if the 20 years' dallying with the same question is remembered. The Armistice was signed on 11th November, 1918, and on the 19th November a conference between the Engineering and National Employés Federations and the Shipbuilding Employers' Federation and representatives of the A.S.E. and the Engineering and Shipbuilding Federation agreed to recommend to their constituents that the working week be reduced to forty-seven hours on the one-break system, to come into effect on January 1st, 1919, without reduction of pay. A ballot was taken by the whole of the societies concerned, when the reduction of hours was accepted. Our vote was: For, 2,267; against, 2,151. The minority concluded that a reduction from fifty-three to forty-seven hours was insufficient and that forty-four hours should be the working week. Others, again, went several steps further and urged the E.C. to press for a thirty-hour week without reduction of wages. However, that body confined themselves to a strong protest against a forty-seven hour week, which was addressed to the Federation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades with a request that it be conveyed to the employers, with what effect it is quite easy to judge.

It was decided to have an alteration of rules, a suggestion that such alteration be postponed until the conclusion of the war being rejected by a narrow majority. This, however, did not matter as the Armistice was signed a few weeks after the vote was taken.

The question of closer unity amongst the engineering trades, which, like the poor, had always been with us without

any progress being made, was superseded by a determined attempt upon the part of the Amalgamated Engineers to go a considerable step further by seeking an amalgamation of all trades connected with the industry. Conferences were held and two sub-committees were appointed to formulate a code of rules, our society being represented, and an active propaganda was instituted throughout the country to further the principles of the complete amalgamation of the engineering trades.

The first conference was held in York on the 11th and 12th September, 1918, and consisted of representatives of the Executives of practically the whole of the engineering and cognate trades with the exception of the moulders. The following resolutions were agreed to at that conference :—

1. "That this meeting declares itself in favour of the principle of amalgamation of the societies engaged in engineering and cognate trades, and that a sub-committee be appointed to draw up a scheme which shall be submitted to the representatives of societies at a meeting to be called at the earliest date."

2. "That the sub-committee be advised to consider unification of contributions and benefits in the new society."

3. "That we affirm the principle of craft autonomy, and it be a subject for the Drafting Committee's consideration."

4. "That a scheme for the formation of an Executive Committee of contracting unions for industrial purposes be submitted by the committee for consideration."

It was agreed that the new organisation be named the "Amalgamated Engineering Union."

The proposed new rules were submitted to and accepted by representatives of the Executives and seventeen societies at a further conference at York on 29th and 30th May, 1919. The delegates to that conference did not, however, represent their colleagues, at least so far as our society were concerned. The E.C., however, acted very fairly towards the minority, and gave them every opportunity to place their views before the members. Both sides of the question are fairly and

temperately indicated in the following circulars issued to the branches :—

“ SPECIAL POSTAL VOTE RE AMALGAMATION.

“ In order to comply with the requirements of the law it is necessary before amalgamation can be effected that each member of the organisations who are negotiating with a view to affecting complete amalgamation must receive a ballot paper, and be given an opportunity of recording his vote.

“ You will, I think, readily recognise the necessity for taking every precaution to comply with the demand of the Act above mentioned, and we desire to urge upon you and your branch officials to assist us to bring about the formation of the new union in the interests of all concerned. For this purpose your attention is drawn to the following :—

“ All ballot papers not used must be kept for the purpose of checking.

“ You are instructed to make arrangements to secure the return of the votes to your General Office by the date stated on the ballot papers, viz., 6th October, 1919.

“ Branch president and secretary will be responsible for the issue to each member of a ballot paper, stamped addressed envelope and copy of this letter, and the number of ballot papers received and issued must be forwarded by secretary, countersigned by branch president, to General Office. An unused ballot paper should be utilised for this purpose. All members are entitled to vote, including apprentices.

“ E.C. ask each individual member personally to record his vote, for or against. It is your responsibility ! On your answer depends the future of yourself and your society. We have done, are doing, and will continue to do the best we can for you. Will you not do the best you can for yourselves ?

“ Do it now ! Let us hear from you. Post your ballot paper before 6th October, 1919, so that we shall have your confidence and wisdom to support us in the final, vital, and most momentous step which the members of

our association have ever had to face. Your E.C. have implicit faith and confidence in your character, intelligence, and ability to carry on and conserve your interests as a craft under any circumstances, therefore, they look forward without fear or favour. To paraphrase Goethe :—

“ ‘ The future hides in it gladness and sorrow,
Naught that abides in it daunting us. Forward ! ’

“ A. FINDLAY, General Secretary.”

“ AMALGAMATION.

“ FELLOW MEMBERS,—Copies of a scheme with the above heading have been circulated with a recommendation in which you are urged to record your vote in favour. It is, therefore, with a full sense of responsibility that I feel it my duty to the membership of our society to remove any misapprehension that may exist when you are recording your vote.

“ The pamphlet in question would seem to convey to you the fact that your E.C. support the present scheme. Let me, therefore, point out that this is not so, the position being that there are only two members of the E.C. who support and recommend the scheme now being submitted to the vote. One other member is prepared to leave it to your decision, and the remaining four members of the E.C., together with your President, while supporting and working in favour of amalgamation, oppose the present scheme and urge you to vote against it, because it does not mean amalgamation but the extinction of the United Patternmakers' Association as a separate craft society, and the absorption of our membership into another organisation with a new name, in which we should become a minority, not able to give or carry out the effective measures that our craft may demand.

“ Further, at the Rules Revision Conference, when some of the most responsible and representative of our members assembled in Birmingham, the above scheme was considered, and it was agreed by 49 votes to 7 ‘ That while supporting the principle of amalgamation, we recommend our members to vote against the scheme now being submitted,’ the delegate meeting thus confirming

and supporting the position taken by the majority of your E.C. and President.

“Furthermore, we regret that the promoters of the scheme did not draft the ballot paper so that a vote could have been taken for or against the principle of amalgamation and a vote for or against the proposed scheme.

“There is no doubt in our mind that a majority would have been in favour of the first question, and if the scheme was not acceptable in its present form the avenue would have been left open for further amendments (and the society funds could have been used), eventually leading to the complete amalgamation of all the engineering trades.

“On behalf of the E.C. majority,

“Yours fraternally,

“A. E. WARDALE, General President.”

In view of this divergence of opinion as also of the opposition of a majority of the delegates to the revision of rules meeting in Birmingham, an affirmative vote was impossible. We got the 50 per cent. vote all right, but whilst 1,444 voted for, 4,168 voted against the scheme. It is well enough to blame the form of the ballot paper for this result, and to state if a vote on the principle of amalgamation had been taken the result would have been different, but experience goes to show that a vote on a principle without the solid foundation of a fully detailed scheme which would give effect to these principles is a simple begging of the question. We have a concrete example at the moment of the three societies chiefly representing the shipbuilding industry who agreed with practical unanimity on the principle of amalgamation, and who, after having spent over a year in time and some thousands of pounds in cash, have gone completely to pieces on the question of detail. Anyhow, we gave no uncertain expression of our views on this question, and we can at all events claim to be the only national organisation of any considerable importance who cast a substantial majority against proposals we assisted to formulate. It will be interesting for the purpose of future reference to give the details of the voting:—

AMALGAMATED ENGINEERING UNIONS. VOTES ANALYSED.

SOCIETIES THAT HAVE ACCEPTED THE SCHEME.

Name of Society.	Ballot papers issued.	Ballot papers returned.	In favour of scheme.	Against the scheme	Percentage of members voting.	Percentage of votes in favour.	Percentage of votes against.
Amalgamated Society of Engineers	313727	177940	163842	14098	56 $\frac{1}{2}$	92 $\frac{1}{2}$	7 $\frac{1}{2}$
United Machine Workers' Association	24750	14098	13154	944	57	93 $\frac{1}{2}$	6 $\frac{1}{2}$
United Kingdom Society of Amalgamated Smiths and Strikers	14250	7929	5781	2148	55 $\frac{1}{2}$	72 $\frac{3}{4}$	27 $\frac{1}{4}$
Steam Engine Makers	29000	16386	11639	4747	56 $\frac{1}{2}$	71	29
Associated Brassfounders, Turners, Fitters, Finishers, and Coppersmiths' Society ..	6561	4017	3062	955	61 $\frac{1}{2}$	76 $\frac{1}{2}$	23 $\frac{3}{4}$
Amalgamated Instrument Makers' Society	8090	4152	3440	712	51 $\frac{1}{2}$	82	18
North of England Brassturners' Fitters, and Finishers	1030	835	797	38	81 $\frac{1}{2}$	95 $\frac{1}{2}$	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
London United Metal Turners, Fitters, and Finishers' Society	581	398	287	111	68 $\frac{1}{2}$	72	28
	397989	225755	202002	23753	56 $\frac{1}{2}$	89 $\frac{1}{2}$	10 $\frac{1}{2}$

SOCIETIES THAT FAILED TO OBTAIN THE NECESSARY NUMBER OF VOTES.

Name of Society.	Ballot papers issued.	Ballot papers returned.	In favour of scheme.	Against the scheme	Percentage of members voting.	Percentage of votes in favour.	Percentage of votes against.
United Patternmakers' Association	11398	5612	1444	4168	49 $\frac{1}{2}$	25 $\frac{1}{2}$	74 $\frac{1}{2}$
Amalgamated Society of General Toolmakers, Engineers, and Machinists ..	46985	21082	17297	3583	45 $\frac{1}{2}$	82	*202 12 $\frac{1}{2}$
Electrical Trades Union	40581	19246	13029	6147	47 $\frac{1}{2}$	67 $\frac{1}{2}$	32 $\frac{1}{2}$
North of England Brass-moulders' Trade and Benefit Society	728	306	43	263	42	14	86
East of Scotland Brassfounders' Society	641	197	93	104	30 $\frac{1}{2}$	47 $\frac{1}{2}$	52 $\frac{1}{2}$
National Brassworkers and Metal Mechanics' Society ..	29150	10256	5700	4556	35 $\frac{1}{2}$	55 $\frac{1}{2}$	44 $\frac{1}{2}$
Dublin Brassfounders and Finishers' Society	168	128	37	91	74 $\frac{1}{2}$	29	71
	129651	56827	37643	18912	43 $\frac{1}{2}$	66 $\frac{1}{2}$	33 $\frac{1}{2}$

* Spoilt papers.

Approximately.

The signing of the Armistice saw the supersession of the Munitions Act by the Wages Temporary Regulation Act and the Committee on Production became the Interim Court of Arbitration. This change did not affect either the procedure or the personnel of the late arbitration arrangements.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to state with any degree of accuracy the average rate of wages paid to our members at the end of 1918. The tables given in annual report state that the rates do not include the $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. granted by the Ministry of Munitions. If this instruction was faithfully observed it is difficult to imagine by what method Rotherham managed to obtain a rate of wages 5s. 6d. in advance of Sheffield, or that Crewe ranks second to Coventry, which latter town, moreover, appears to have enjoyed a rate of wages £2 5s. 4d. in advance of Birmingham, whilst Swansea, usually one of our best paid centres, appears at the bottom of the list with a wage rate of £2 14s. 6d., its neighbours of Cardiff and Newport returning rates of 10s. and 15s. respectively in advance of Swansea. However, we give the figures as they appear in our official record, the average rate being returned at £3 10s. 9d. as against an average rate of £3 2s. 6d. at the end of 1917. The general hearings took place as prescribed in February, June, and October, with the result as already noted. The $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. would add 8s. 10d. to our 1918 rate, making the time rates £3 19s. 7d., which, if we disregard the bonus payments which a certain proportion of our members were receiving, was less than was being paid to most of the street sweepers in the Metropolitan boroughs.

We made considerable progress during the year with regard to the extension of our areas, eight branches being opened, which raised our numbers from 101 to 109. Our membership also showed a most substantial and gratifying increase; 630 entrants were recorded during the year, whilst 228 were excluded for various reasons. Our gain in membership numbered 402, and our total at the end of the year stood at 10,407.

Financially, we had the most successful year in our history. Our total income reached the enormous sum of £48,810, or £4 13s. 9½d. per member, a record, being 1d. per member more than in 1914. The actual payments of our members did not, however, reach that proportionate figure by any

means, some £8,500 having accrued to our funds as unearned increment in the way of interest and various repayments. Our expenditure reached the very substantial sum of £26,615, or £2 11s. 1½d. per member, giving us a total gain over the year of £23,083 and raising our balance to £157,574, or £15 2s. 10d. per member. By far the largest item of expenditure was claimed by Sick, Funeral, and Maternity Benefit, which accounted for almost exactly one-half of our total payments. Management came next at a cost of £8,508, or 16s. 4½d. per member, an addition of 4s. per member over the previous year's expenses, whilst superannuation showed a slight increase over the figures of 1917. Assistance and augmentation expenditure, a very difficult benefit to clearly define, cost the society the quite substantial sum of £1,881, whilst our premier benefit—Unemployed—accounted for the insignificant proportion of our expenditure of £301, or 6½d. per member, a slight advance on our out-of-work payments for the previous year.

The year 1918 was a period of the utmost anxiety and danger to the country at large, but was a time of abounding prosperity for the Trade Unions, who had now achieved a position politically, socially, and economically which they never would have attained had it not been for the abnormal conditions imposed by the war.

1919.

A considerable degree of industrial unrest marked the first few months of this year. Whilst the war had terminated, its echoes were still with us. Demobilisation was not so rapid as was expected, and considerable irritation was felt by men who were held fast by the naval and military authorities, and who, in many instances, saw their jobs being filled by those who had either been quickly released from the Services or had escaped service altogether. Considerable disappointment was felt at the paucity of the advances given by the Committee on Production and the Interim Court of Arbitration, and, naturally enough, indignation was felt and freely expressed when these bodies found that the claims of the workmen were "not established." The hours question was also a cause of considerable ferment. The reduction from fifty-three and fifty-four to forty-seven had been so easily accomplished that quite

a number held the view that a further reduction would have been obtainable with a little extra pressure, and the cry for the forty-four-hour week became quite the vogue during the early part of the year.

It had been promised that after the successful conclusion of the war this country would be made a land fit for heroes and that C3 men would speedily become an unhappy memory, instead of which, the returning heroes found themselves without homes and, in many cases, without work, and although so far as we were concerned work was plentiful and the demand for our labour seemed to be a permanent condition, there is no doubt but that we were infected by the general unrest existing at that period, and showed it by kicking over the traces at every opportunity, and that without benefiting ourselves or anyone else one jot. We objected to the use of military in the case of a strike and lock-out in Glasgow, and asked the Federation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades to call a conference of the Executives implicated.

Several branches demanded the stoppage of all overtime pending a settlement of our application for a 50 per cent. advance in wages and with a view to shopping all unemployed members. Seeing that we had only 252 members on the books at the time, the majority of whom were out owing to the Glasgow dispute, the E.C. very judiciously declined this suggestion. They had, however, allowed a surprising degree of latitude to the districts in this matter. The Clyde District Committee had been allowed to enforce a stoppage of overtime from 2nd September, 1918, in connection with the movement of the woodworking trades for a minimum of £5 per week. We withdrew from this movement and linked up with the Shipbuilding and Engineering Federation, when, by vote, the embargo was renewed; and when the wage demand failed we still maintained our hostility to the working of overtime. Toward the end of the year, however, considerable pressure was brought to bear on the E.C. to forcibly put a stop to all overtime. They, however, limited their responsibilities to an appeal to every member to stop all overtime, and pointed out that ample proof existed of the beneficial effect of such stoppage whenever it had been put into effect. It may be noted, however, that the moulders' strike was then in full swing, and we had 684 members out of work.

The E.C., however, atoned for this show of weakness in regard to overtime, by addressing a solemn warning to the Prime Minister of the consequences of omitting Labour delegates from the deliberations of the Peace Conference, and received a polite acknowledgment from his Secretary.

We were not alone in considering a forty-seven-hour week as inadequate, and a meeting of the representatives of the Executives of the interested societies was held to consider a still further shortening of the hours of labour. The delegates, however, came to loggerheads, several leaving the meeting in protest. Greater progress, however, attended a further meeting held on March 27th, which was composed of six members of the Executives of the federated societies and of the A.S.E., together with a representative of the Friendly Society of Ironfounders, when it was decided to move for a forty-four-hour week, a proposal that forty hours be substituted being rejected.

It was intimated that the recently appointed Industrial Council Committee had agreed to recommend a forty-eight-hour week as the maximum for all unorganised trades, so the organised and skilled trades were acting with great moderation in demanding a forty-four-hour week. It may be here noted that the National Industrial Council had resigned, not one of their recommendations having received the sanction of Parliament.

Our members showed quite unusual interest in the question of a forty-four-hour week, 4,756 voting for, and 111 against. Negotiations were opened up with the employers without any definite result, and at a further meeting of the various Executive representatives it was decided to recommend the appointment of six employers and six members of the Negotiating Committee to investigate the economic effect of a forty-four-hour working week throughout the engineering and shipbuilding industry, having regard to methods of production and foreign competition, with an Independent Chairman. These findings were by no means unanimous, our representatives moving: "That a vote of the membership be taken seeking authority to hand in notices on October 1st with a view to enforcing the union's demands." More moderate counsels prevailed, however, and

the former proposals were agreed to. Further negotiations between the employers and the Negotiating Committee resulted in a proposal to "appoint a Court of Inquiry, with alternate Chairmen, and the terms of reference to be on working conditions generally without mention of forty-four hours." In spite of a vigorous protest by our delegates, who wished the original proposals of the Negotiating Committee to be submitted to the vote of the various societies, the latter proposals were carried and the Court of Inquiry agreed to.

Considerable dissatisfaction existed throughout the industry because of the "unsatisfactory nature of the awards" of the Interim Court of Arbitration, and the E.C. decided to take a ballot vote on the propriety of withdrawing from the agreement of February, 1917, providing for four monthly hearings. By 3,144 to 399 votes our members decided to withdraw and notice was accordingly given to the Ministry of Labour and to the employers. It may be stated here that the ironfounders decided on the same course, but they supplemented their decision by coming out on strike to enforce an advance, and after nineteen weeks on the streets, during which they spent all their funds and got deeply into debt, they returned to work precisely as they came out. So far as we were concerned we decided by 3,542 to 128 votes to apply for an advance of 15s. per week, supplementing this decision by a threat to withhold our labour if the application was a total failure, 3,936 voting for and 596 against this drastic course. The amount we were asking was similar to the application of the engineering trades and was made at the same time to the employers as that of the general body of engineers was submitted to the Court of Arbitration. The latter body awarded 5s. advance and the employers offered us the same advance with the same embargo against a further application until the February hearing, and these terms were accepted by a "speeded-up" vote of our members by 2,720 to 777 votes.

The question of payment by results had formed a subject for discussion at the Birmingham alteration of rules meeting, and it had been decided by that body to take a vote upon the question of maintaining our supposed time rate status. Before that decision our Lancashire and Cheshire members had applied for an advance of wages, and had obtained the

co-operation of the A.S.E., S.E.M., and the National Union of Stove, Grate, and General Metal Workers, when the following agreement was signed :—

It is hereby mutually agreed that—

“ 1. Firms be recommended to fix a labour cost for the pattern and a bonus will be paid based on the amount saved, such amount to be pooled and paid to all patternmakers in proportion to wages earned.

“ 2. In fixing a labour cost consideration shall be given to the national piecework agreement of 1st April, 1919, to enable a man of average ability to earn at least $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent. over present time rates (excluding war bonuses).

“ 3. The scheme recommended shall apply to all firms, provided that firms employing more than 20 patternmakers shall have the option of adopting a group system to fit in with the firm's system of management.

“ 4. The foregoing to commence as from Monday, 3rd November, 1919, and to remain in operation for a period of six months thereafter.

“ Dated this 10th day of October, 1919.”

A sequel to the above agreement was a resolution passed by the E.C. in the following terms :—

“ That E.C. are thoroughly dissatisfied with the scheme, which is entirely unacceptable to them, and any member or members working it do so on their own responsibility, and may be subject to proceedings later.”

The attitude of the E.C. was based on that of the Birmingham Conference, which decided to take a vote as to whether any departure from time rate be allowed. If the voting was in the affirmative the E.C. were to take steps to arrive at a uniform and general system, but if in the negative they were to take steps to raise the time rates so “ that the weekly wage will be equal to or exceed the moneys now being received under the present systems in operation.” Rather significant was a decision carried by 29 to 27 votes against inviting those in the room to declare whether they were working any system other than a flat rate.

The voting was taken upon three alternative issues : (1) Day work system; (2) continuance of bonus systems in operation

to be agreed between our society and the employers and to be applied nationally; (3) for the employers and the E.C. to agree upon a national system of payment by results. The voting was: (1) 2,787, (2) 1,574, and (3) 525. In all 4,886 votes were cast, which was much above our general average; but the net result was that by a substantial majority our members declared in favour of purely time rates. This was a somewhat diluted confirmation of a declaration of policy which we made at the end of December, 1918, when, by 2,049 to 454 votes, we decided against even discussing the question of payment by results with the employers. However, at the close of 1919 our official attitude toward this question was one of such uncompromising hostility toward any system of payment by results that we had placed an embargo upon even discussing the question with the employers. All the same, our Lancashire and Cheshire members had entered into a formal agreement with their employers for a six-months' trial of a system of payment which was a direct negation of purely time rates in spite of the expostulations and threats of the E.C., and were benefiting to the extent of 16s. per week under this arrangement—it was subsequently stated that the increase varied from 10s. to 30s. per week.

It will be as well to disregard the purely chronological account of our attitude toward this question and exhaust it without reference to a record of each year's happenings.

At the beginning of 1920 we made formal application to the Engineering Employers' Federation for a conference to consider: (1) Wages applications; (2) national agreement as to number of apprentices; (3) limitation of overtime; (4) time allowed young journeymen to obtain standard rate of wages. We suggested that the conference to deal with these questions be held at the end of February. Five conferences were held, and finally a proposed agreement was submitted by the employers, dated April 20th, 1920, similar to an agreement applied to the engineering trades, and which had been formally accepted, so far as it was applicable, by the National Federation of General Workers. It was decided that the employers' proposals should be submitted to a gathering which was altogether unique in our history, every branch being represented, together with the full E.C. The meeting was held in Manchester on May 20th, 1920, and cost £1,038 3s. 6d., coupled

with the employers' general proposals was an undertaking that our differential time rate should be 8s. in excess of the time rates of fitters and turners.

The proceedings of the conference were given *verbatim* in a special report of eighty-five pages, and forms very interesting reading. Whilst the employers' proposals covered a wide area, including the acceptance of the Provisions for Avoiding Disputes, contained in the engineers' 1898 agreement, the chief interest centred in the question of payment by results, and the discussion was almost wholly devoted to that one question. Although we had placed a limitation of apprentices in our rules, it was made quite clear that the employers would have none of it. Similarly, although we imposed a limit of twelve months in which a young journeyman should obtain full rates in our rule book, the employers refused to bind themselves to any such arrangement. No better fate befell our statutory limitation of overtime, which the employers declined to recognise; and on the question of wages, after a protracted discussion, as has already been stated, we were offered a differential rate of approximately 8s. per week in excess of fitters and turners' rates, provided we agreed to a system of payment by results.

Previous to the conference, the E.C. had asked for a full return from the branches of the members who were working under any system of bonus, and the returns made indicated that between 3,000 and 4,000 of our members were not limiting their earnings to simple time rates. After a very full discussion, during which the principle of payment by results was denounced with varied virulence by almost every speaker, the following resolution was carried with apparent unanimity:—

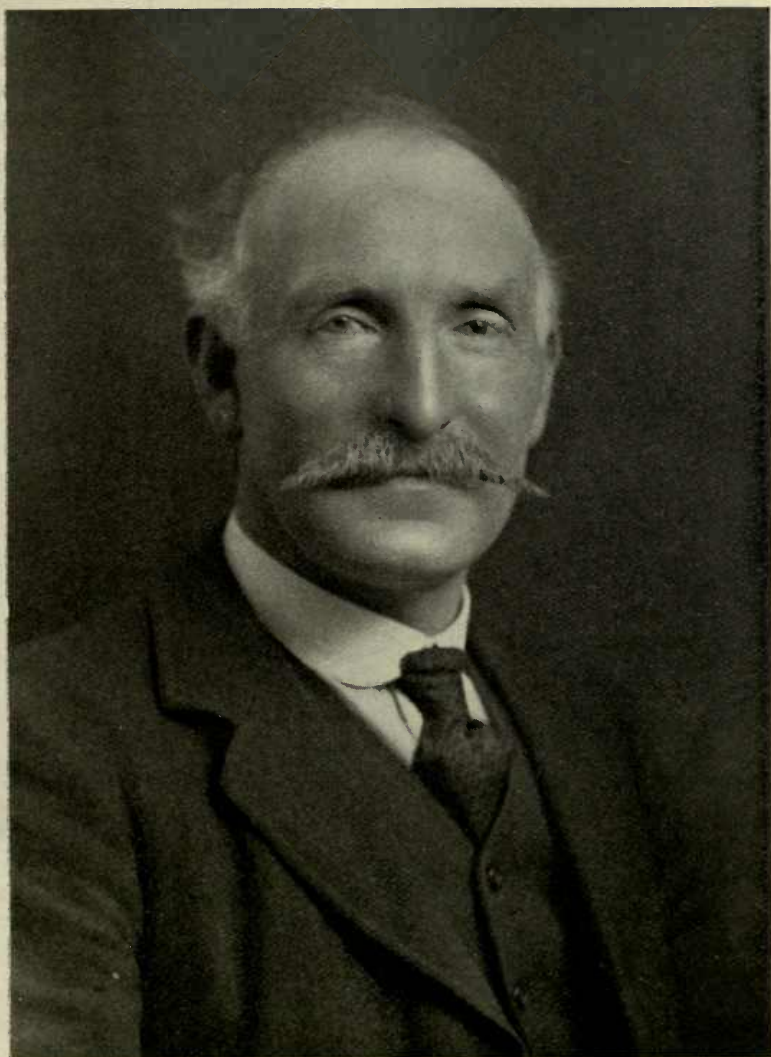
“That this meeting declare most emphatically against the proposed memorandum of agreement submitted by the National Employers, and recommend the delegates present to advise their branches to vote against the same.”

The original proposal contained as the concluding sentence, “even to the downing of tools.” These words were, however, deleted by vote. Unfortunately the numbers were not given; it would have been interesting to compute the number of delegates who were anxious to strike against a system under which they were then working.

A vote of the members was taken at the half-yearly meeting in June, and was probably the largest ever recorded in our history, one-half of the members voting, the result being that 865 votes were cast in favour of the employers' memorandum of agreement and 5,048 against. This was the most emphatic condemnation of the bonus system we had ever indulged in and was hailed by the E.C. as such, who evidently saw in it a path to a higher and fuller life, which they were prepared to reach even "through bloody revolution." Pending these lofty rhetorical flights, the vote certainly should have not only scotched all bonus systems in our trade, but prevented their further extension. But did it? If so, it is a thousand pities that we have no knowledge that any of our members in any district attempted or practised sufficient self-abnegation to abandon a system which had been so roundly condemned by the expressed popular opinion of the society. On the other hand, we have quite casually heard that Cowes, strongly opposed to payment by results, had tried a bonus scheme and found it to their liking, whilst on the North-East Coast—the cradle of our society—where our members justly prided themselves with being in the vanguard of progress, we find that a bonus system was insidiously making its way into several of the shops on Tyneside, to what extent it was impossible at the time to ascertain, as at a conference of shop stewards and the local District Committee the names of the offending members were refused, for which act of recalcitrancy these functionaries were fined, and severe disciplinary measures resorted to against the known transgressors, none of which had the slightest effect upon the delinquents except to let loose a flood of not very entertaining correspondence, which came to a sudden end when the District Committee cancelled all penalties on the ground that it "would be unfair that our members in this area should be penalised for doing what is being done elsewhere." This so late as June, 1921. Adverting to the position created by the June vote, as nothing whatever was done to carry it to its logical conclusion, complaints from our members, who were presumably working on flat-time rates, were continual, and in January, 1921, the E.C. decided to shift their responsibilities in the matter to the society at large by asking them to vote for or against a resolution which read: "Are you

prepared to exclude all members who continue to work any bonus or piecework system after July 1st?" They pointed out that approximately 4,000 of our members were affected by this vote. As they all had the right to vote, the result was a foregone conclusion, 2,415 voting for and 4,088 voting against the resolution. Another record vote, considerably over one-half of our working membership having voted.

Whilst the E.C. can now disclaim any responsibility in regard to this question, what is the attitude of the society toward the application of any system of payment by result to our trade, or have we any policy at all in regard to this vital matter? If it were possible it would be well to expunge from our records all reference to this question, but this is quite impossible, as next to amalgamation it is the most important matter we have had to handle in our history. We claim to have been a time-working trade from the commencement of our society. This is not quite correct, as 50 years ago piecework was known on the Tyne and time and a-half (pudden) was fairly common, and it was owing to the jealousy of the men on pure time rates that these inducements were discontinued. Generally, however, we have claimed—and our claim has been admitted by usage, with a few exceptions, notably in Birmingham—to be a trade to which any system other than time rates was inapplicable. We have urged that it is impossible to estimate even approximately the length of time it would take to do any job, also that piecework or bonus would lead to scamped work. So far as the latter point is concerned there is no patternmaker who would willingly scamp his work; he has to do his job correctly, and anyhow the whole question is one of requirement and supervision, and so far as estimated cost is concerned it is being done every day, and there can be no hardship if standard rates are guaranteed, as is invariably the case, but whether this be the case or not, there is not the slightest doubt that on every occasion upon which our members have been asked to express their opinion upon the question they have unhesitatingly pronounced against any system of payment by results. From time to time the employers have invited us to try a change, and we have invariably refused; but that has not prevented a gradual and insidious introduction of bonus schemes into



A. FINDLAY,
Assistant General Secretary, 1913-1917.
General Secretary, 1917.

our trade by various employers. As a rule, the change was made quietly and was only known casually and a considerable time after it had been effected. Had the employers pursued this policy it is probable that many more of our members would have worked this system than the central authorities had any official cognisance of.

The position, however, was forced owing to the war and the consequent increased cost of living, and the incessant and quite justifiable demands of our members for more money was met by the inevitable rejoinder that we were subject to the same decisions as were the trades with whom we were associated, and the fact that we cut ourselves adrift did not help us one iota. It is probable that the employers had considerable sympathy with our special claims for consideration, especially if constant reiteration could have such an effect, and they certainly went far to show practical sympathy with our special claims when they coupled with a series of proposals, which, in essence and as far as were applicable, had already been accepted by our contemporaries, an offer of a differential rate of 8s. per week. Such an offer was far and away beyond anything we had ever asked for or expected to get. Fifty years ago we wanted a general 2s. per week differential, and it is probable that over one-half of our members are working at this modest proportion to this day, whilst there are some districts even yet where patternmakers are working for the same average rates as fitters and turners. The 8s. per week was denounced as a bribe. Perhaps it was, but it was still an advance of from 4s. to 6s. per week to the vast majority of our members who are on time rates, and that is considerably more than they are likely to obtain by any means within their reach in this day and generation; whilst to our 4,000 members who are known to be working on bonus, this special inducement had no meaning. However, the offer was contemptuously rejected, and officially we recognise plain time rates only, and just as officially we decline to apply the supreme penalty of expulsion to such of our members as refuse to follow the policy laid down by the society.

No blame it attachable to our members who have accepted bonus payments. Every effort had been made to increase time rates, but, as the North-East Committee plaintively admits, that after eighteen months' strenuous and unceasing effort the

result was nil, and in disgust they threw overboard their local Conciliation Board, which has not improved their position one whit. Little wonder was it that when an opportunity presented itself to increase their earnings—call it what you like—they took it, especially as at the time we were utterly unable to overtake the work in hand. Where we erred was in not facing the position boldly and honestly. We had Lancashire entering into a formal agreement with the local employers. Whilst their action was diametrically opposed to our national policy, it is to their credit that they worked in the open and published their agreement in the Monthly Report, and so highly do they appreciate the advantage of their agreement that at the time of writing they are complaining bitterly that some employers are docking our members of the bonus, and instead of hailing them as the harbingers of a new era of time rates, they darkly threaten reprisals when opportunity offers.

Many of the changes, however, were made surreptitiously, and we have already recorded an instance where officials of the society deliberately refused important information to their own local authority. Then we had the meeting at Manchester, where only the General Secretary had the courage to protest against a sacrifice of the members' material interests to a worn-out and useless shibboleth, and where probably one-half of the delegates voted against a system which they were working and profiting by. We had members voting in their branches against payment by results, or, what was worse, staying away when the vote was being taken, and at the same time petitioning to share in output bonuses which were being paid to other presumably time workers.

The whole question was essentially one for a national policy and treatment, and this course was followed up to a certain point, but after obtaining several mandates from our highest authority—a national vote—the E.C. threaten with condign penalties these who kick over the traces—and do not perform. They are followed by the North-East Coast District Committee, both bodies having put their hands out further than they could—with dignity—draw them back. All the advice, expostulations, and threatenings by our chief administrative authority have not had the slightest effect in restraining such of our members who were willing to accept bonus payments from doing so, and there is not a recorded instance, either

in the immediate or distant past, where our members working under these often condemned schemes have voluntarily relinquished them and gone back to plain time rates. Our official record in respect of this question is an unlovely one, and however disinterested and unselfish the motives of those of our members who have consistently opposed, both in theory and practice, any other system than a plain hourly or daily rate of wages it cannot be denied that our attitude as a society towards the bonus question has been hypocritical and pusillanimous to an extent which happily has hitherto been unknown in our annals.

The society having decided to adopt the principle of direct Parliamentary representation, gave effect to their decision by what is surely the poorest effective vote ever cast by our members. Only ten branches voted, although other subjects of importance were being voted upon at the same time, the result being that 209 voted for and twenty against our society adventuring upon the political ocean. Bro. Buchanan, a member of the Glasgow Branch and a local Town Councillor, was elected as our candidate.

Our decision not to join the amalgamation of the engineering trades aroused considerable interest in the question of closer unity amongst our members, and quite a number of resolutions were published advocating affiliation with the foundry trades and even with the general wood-working trades. None of these suggestions were, however, pressed to a vote, and we still preserve our position of splendid isolation.

It is quite a novelty to find that we have not quite got rid of demarcation troubles, we having had a dispute with the Hull shipwrights as to which trade should make hawse pipe patterns. The matter was sensibly settled by our trade getting the work where they were regularly employed; where we had no representatives it was anybody's job.

Towards the end of November the Interim Court of Arbitration ceased to exist and the Industrial Courts Act (1919) took its place. The Industrial Court set up under the new Act was an entirely voluntary institution, to which we in common with other engineering societies have not made as full a use of as was expected.

The most important administrative action we undertook during the year was to effect a complete alteration of rules, the last alteration having taken place seven years previously, and there is no doubt but that the 1919 alteration marked a very important epoch in our history. The meeting was held during August, lasted ten days, was attended by 62 delegates, and cost £1,245 15s. 3d. Some 575 distinct issues were submitted to the meeting, 340 of which were agreed to, and the net result is that we now have a rule book of 170 pages. Our first code was a modest booklet of 48 pages. It may be as well to note, however, that 48 pages of our present rule book are devoted to Auxiliary and National Health Insurance.

It was perhaps unfortunate that the alteration of our rules took place when it did. At every complete alteration we have yet had the delegates came with an earnest determination to extract as much in the way of increased benefits and allowances as they possibly can, and the prodigality they show in increasing expenditure is only equalled by their extreme reluctance to effect a corresponding increase in our income, the consequence being that our statutory contribution has only been a figure of speech, and we have had to supplement our income by a permanent series of levies, amounting in times of peace to, roughly, 50 per cent. of our contribution, and considerably more if we were involved in an industrial crisis of any magnitude.

In August, 1919, we had experienced a run of good trade for so long that the members at large could not be blamed if they considered it permanent, and they had every apparent justification for believing that the patternmaker had at last come into his own, and whatever happened in the future he at least was immune from the spectre of unemployment. Our coffers were full to overflowing, and our chief financial difficulty was to find the best and safest investments for our spare cash. Had we indulged in a badge at the time it surely could have been represented by a blend of the widow's cruse and a cornucopia. Under these happy circumstances it was little wonder that the delegates gave full play to their imaginations and increased our prospective expenditure out of all proportion to the increase in our income.

An excellent decision was that to abolish levies by absorbing what might be termed permanent levies into a flat rate of

contribution. Our former rate of contribution was 1s. 3d. per week; this sum was increased to 1s. 10d., and was supposed to be an inclusive and permanent rate of contribution. It was further claimed that this amount would increase our payments by only 1d. per week. Circumstances, however, have played us a sorry trick, and we find that within two years of a declaration of no levies we are taking a vote upon a levy of 8d. per week on behalf of our unemployed members.

The rules with regard to the admission of members were altered so as to admit apprentices of 16 years of age. This was done to secure them as approved members under the National Insurance Act. They pay a contribution of 2d. per week and are eligible for reduced Sick and Funeral Benefit. They have full access to all meetings and may address their elders with the consent of the president. Much more importance is their liability under rule to be brought out on strike after they have been one year at the trade, and their numbers are limited to a maximum of one apprentice to five men. The society also pledges itself to oppose the binding of apprentices. This is the kind of legislation which makes a community look ridiculous, by putting in a hard and fast code of rules and restrictions they have no power to enforce.

It was also decided to reinstate our old "poaching" rule, camouflaged under the euphonious title of "Transitional Membership," by which members of other societies were encouraged to turn over on payment of a small extra contribution and become entitled to immediate benefits. There is nothing to be said against this reversion, as the A.S.E. have been doing it for many years.

Benefits were increased by approximately 50 per cent. Trade Benefit was raised from 12s. to 18s. per week for ten-year members, and other scales in proportion, whilst Sick Benefit was increased from 10s. to 15s., ten-year members receiving 8s. per week continuous benefit—the first continuous benefit we have adopted, with the exception of Superannuation Benefit. As might be expected, this benefit was subjected to the all-round uplift, a member with forty-five years' continuous membership becoming entitled to 12s. per week, whilst the embargo against those plutocrats who had a private income exceeding the district rate was withdrawn and is only now applied to those who, whilst otherwise eligible, earn more

than that rate. Contingent Benefit was raised from 10d. to 1s. per day, and Tool Benefit from £10 to £20. Some slight additions were made to the benefits of Trade Protection members. Auxiliary Sick and Funeral Benefits and contributions were not interfered with.

There is a good deal of justification for a substantial increase in our benefits, and the increases noted are nothing like equivalent to the increase in the cost of living, and there is no doubt but that a member on 12s. Trade Benefit prior to 1914 was much better off than he is at the present time on 18s. per week. The question is, can the society afford to pay the increased benefits on an increased income of 1d. per week, and especially can they afford to pay continuous Sick Benefit to a member who may have spent most of his ten years as a recipient of either Trade or Sick Benefit. This benefit is simply a form of young-age superannuation, and has ruined every local friendly society which has undertaken to pay one-half of what we now pay. It is not as if our members were content with their benefit as laid down by rule. As soon as an unforeseen emergency takes place which throws a number on the streets, a demand is made for extra benefit, and is at once acceded to. It cannot be said that these additional payments are illegal, as our last revision of rules established a fund which has probably no parallel in the Trade Union movement.

The Assistance Fund has an income provided by an apportionment from our contributions at the discretion of the Executive Council, who have full power to disburse our funds by granting additional benefits to our own and other trades, but can also use this fund to "strengthen the hand of fellowship," whatever that may mean. A saving clause provides that the augmentation of benefit during abnormal trade depression is subject to the votes of the working members, but this rule was agreed to when we had no members out of work and had paid nothing to speak of for Trade Benefit for several years past. Its generosity and amplitude have been such that in consequence of the miners' strike and general depression in trade we have expended a total of £60,000 for the June quarter of 1921, and have lost £30,000 during that quarter, and, in addition to State Unemployment Benefit, we are paying members a flat rate of 23s. per week without any reference to the

period they are unemployed by means of the elastic grants chargeable to the Assistance Fund, and in order to maintain these benefits it is proposed to increase our contributions from 1s. 10d. to 2s. 6d. per week for six months.

These comparisons are made in no carping spirit, but are intended to deal with the strict legal position, and in the opinion of the writer it is infinitely to the credit of the society that if we have to accompany a faltering brother one mile we go with him twain, and it is the second voluntary mile that counts, but it is necessary to place on record the fact that we voted ourselves greatly increased benefits, for which we made no adequate provision, that these benefits have proved quite inadequate under the abnormal conditions which applied two years after the alteration of rules, and that it has under dire necessity been found necessary to ask the members to revert to the system of levies which our Revision Committee declared against in 1919.

As might have been expected, the delegates regularised the scale of salaries which had already been previously agreed to by the members, and which were provisionally paid from that useful adjunct to the rules, the Assistance Fund. This being so, it seems scarcely worth while to make any comment; the old days of voluntary service are past, and we insist upon paying everyone who performs the most trifling duty on a most generous scale. This practice is not confined to our organisation, but is one of the signs of modern progressivism throughout the Trade Union movement. Our object in days gone by was to keep management expenses to as near 7s. per member per year as possible. The Insurance Act made this limit impossible, but 10s. was considered as much as our expenses should amount to. Now these expenses exceed 24s. and we now occupy the position of having developed from being perhaps the most economically managed to being the most lavish in our management expenses of any national society representing skilled workmen in the kingdom.

Perhaps the most important change in our constitution was in regard to our methods of management. For 45 years we had a local Executive, who retained as much of the confidence—or want of it—as is usually accorded to bodies in a responsible position in the Trade Union movement. We had, in addition, a National General Council, who met when there was sufficient business to justify a meeting, which was not

very often. Our organising work was efficiently and economically done by the rank and file of our members, who taught the young men undergoing their probationary servitude to our trade, to look forward with a feeling of pride and ambition to the time when they could become members of our organisation, and no one can but admit that this voluntary service was freely and voluntarily rendered.

Several attempts had been made from time to time to induce the members by vote to appoint a Scottish Organiser or a full-time official under this rather uncertain and nebulous description, but all such proposals had been vigorously opposed by the E.C. and turned down by the members, and with every reason. No society in the Trade Union movement was better or more economically managed than ours, no complaints of any importance were levelled at our administrative authorities, and such as were made were found on investigation to be trivial and cantankerous. In August, 1919, we had any amount of money to burn and no premonition of evil days to come, and the delegates let themselves loose with a vengeance. They cast out our useful and handy local Executive, always dependable at a few hours' notice, and installed a National Executive of seven members, whose remuneration when absent from work was fixed at 20s. per day, with expenses, from 10s. to 15s. per day (since considerably increased by vote of the society). The National Executive meets each month and has the power to appoint a Sub-Committee of three to deal with emergencies. We do not know if the average member is of opinion that his affairs are more efficiently managed now than under the previous regime, or whether he quite realises that the expenses of the local Executive cost in 1916 £35, whilst in 1920 the National Executive cost £766. In addition, it was decided to have a National President, and no particular objection can be taken to this change, especially if he happens to be a local member.

The General Council of seven were superseded by an Appeal Court of three, who are like their predecessors, nationally elected, and their duties appear to be much the same as the late General Council. It was also decided to have three National Trustees, the society showing their good sense by electing local aspirants. Another drastic change was the

appointment of full-time Organisers. No limit is placed upon the number of these officials, who may be appointed by any District Committee or group of branches by a two-thirds majority of the members. The district must undertake to pay one-half his salary by their voluntary contributions. The appointment of Organisers is subject to the sanction of the E.C., to which body they are amenable, and up to the present these full-time officials have been appointed for the Clyde, North-East Coast, Manchester, and Birmingham. A new departure was the official appointment of shop conveners and shop stewards in each shop, the latter being compulsory where District Committees existed. Their chief duties are to periodically examine members' contributions cards, as also to require the production of the cards of new starters. These officials have no stated salary, but are paid as witnesses when required to attend meetings.

The limit below which the society's funds should not be allowed to fall was altered from £3 10s. to £5 per member. The old proviso has been retained by which the society may take measures to increase the weekly payments, even if our funds do not fall below the present minimum. A rather surprising reversal to an abandoned practice was made by the inclusion of advances to our members who wished to purchase a house amongst our list of investments. These advances had been made since 1899 and were abandoned, so far as the General Funds were concerned, on the ground that they tended to foster the capitalist instinct in those who wished to provide themselves with a landlord-free shelter in their declining years. The scheme has now been reinstituted and appears to be more popular than when it existed under our former code of rules. There does not appear to have been any alterations effected in our Auxiliary Sick and Funeral Fund, and any change in the National Health Insurance Rules would be the result of Departmental Orders.

We certainly effected some drastic changes in our 1919 code of rules, especially in their administrative features, and time alone will tell us as to whether the new rules will prove a benefit to the trade and organisation, and whether we can carry out our obligations with the provision our delegates made for the payment of the additional benefits and management costs under the circumstances of a condition of trade vastly

differing from what was being experienced when these alterations were being effected. After all, a country and a Trade Union have the government they desire and deserve, and no one can deny that the delegates to our Birmingham Revision Conference acted throughout within their powers and what they honestly believed was in the best interests of the society.

There is little to report upon regarding wages during the year. Before we withdrew from the February, 1917, agreement our demands were merged in those of the general body. Afterwards we shared the fortunes of our contemporaries without being represented at the four-monthly hearings. Apart from these general movements we made several attempts to increase the rates in low-paid districts either through the Interim Court of Arbitration before our secession or by arrangement with local employers.

At Newark and Gainsborough we obtained Lincoln rates, which meant advances of from 11s. 10d. to 16s. 4d. per week. At Luton, through the Arbitration Court, our members engaged on light casting work received increases of 7s. per week. At Dublin, where Belfast rates were demanded, an advance of 1s. 9d. per week was obtained, whilst Crewe received an increase of 2s. per week. The average rate of wages is not given in the Annual Report, probably because about one-third of the branches include the 12½ per cent., and there are other apparent discrepancies which make the figures given valueless as an indication of the rate of wages in our various districts. The average works out at £4 2s. 6d., and is given for what it is worth, and on the assumption that the 1918 returns contained as many 12½ per cents. as those for 1919, the difference in favour of the average rate for the latter year works out at 11s. 9d. Of the three general applications made during the year only one was successful, 5s. being granted by the Arbitration Court in November and applied to our trade by the Engineering and National Employers' Federation, our own efforts to obtain any concession from that body by direct negotiation having proved unsuccessful.

We made considerable progress during the year with regard to the opening of new branches, six being added to our numbers, giving us a total of 115 at the end of the year. In only one case was new ground broken. In the other cases

the opening of a new branch was rendered necessary by the increase in the number of existing branches. Our increase in membership easily constituted a record, our admissions numbering 1,536; exclusions were 186, much below the average, our gain in membership for the year being 1,361, leaving us with a total membership of 11,668. We also created a record financially so far as our income was concerned, which reached a total of £51,977, or £4 9s. 1d. per member, being 4s. 8½d. per member less than was recorded for 1918. Expenditure amounted to £35,026, or £3 0s. 1½d. per member, being 9s. per member more than we spent the previous year. Our gain for the year reached £16,951, which left us with a total balance of £174,734, or £14 19s. 6d. per member, a reduction, according to the tables in Annual Report, of 3s. 4d. per member.

An unusual feature of our recent balance sheets was that we could no longer describe our Trade Benefit expenditure as a negligible quantity, the substantial sum of £5,808, or 9s. 11½d. per member being expended on this benefit. This, however, could not be altogether attributed to bad trade, but was chiefly due to the number of our members who were thrown out of employment owing to the Moulders' strike, which lasted some 19 weeks. Our Sick Benefit showed a reduction of £2,180 during the year, and costing us 19s. 2½d. per member, and was much the lowest since the National Insurance Act came into being, the reduction over the previous year's figures being 6s. 6d. per member. Management expenses easily eclipsed all previous records and amounted to £11,000, or 18s. 10d. per member. Superannuation Benefit showed its usual steady aggregate increase and cost £2,557, or 4s. 4½d. per member, being £159 more than we spent in 1918, but showing a reduction of 3d. per member over the previous year's proportionate expenditure. Assistance grants cost the substantial amount of £3,248, or 5s. 6d. per member, being a considerable increase in the figures of the previous year. It may be added that our average number of unemployed members was 230, or 2.1 per cent., as compared with an average of 25 and .25 per cent. for 1918, the monthly numbers ranging from thirty-one in June to 816 in December, the abnormal number out of work during the last three months of the year being due to the Moulders' strike.

1920.

The industrial situation during the year can be fairly described as favourable; trade was good, and our members were fully employed. A little difficulty was experienced at the beginning of the year in clearing our vacant books owing to the aftermath of the strike of Moulders, but from February onwards no complication occurred to prevent the full employment of the members of our trade, except during the latter part of the year, when some rather disquieting evidence was apparent that the crest of the wave had been reached and that we might expect a change for the worse in our monthly unemployment returns. We had 450 members out of work at the end of January, and our minimum was reached in May, when only eighteen were returned as being unemployed. Our monthly average for the year was 116 and our percentage 1.08, both figures showing an improvement on the returns of the previous year.

The Interim Court of Arbitration ceased to exist in November, 1919, and the Industrial Courts Act had taken its place. Arbitration under that Act was purely voluntary, even to the acceptance of awards by non-associated employers, and the engineering and shipbuilding trades have now resorted to their pre-war policy of dealing with their industrial problems through the Provisions for Avoiding Disputes, and an implied arrangement, existed whereby the organisations not covered by these "Provisions," and who were affiliated with the Federation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades associated themselves with the organisations party to that agreement in direct negotiations with the Employers' Federation in respect to general applications regarding wages, hours, etc.

This procedure did not immediately apply, the Industrial Court being requisitioned for the usual February application, when 3s. advance was granted in March and a similar amount in May. These advances were paid to our members and we put ourselves right for any further concessions which might be given through State arbitration by asking the employers to pay our trade any advance which might be given by the Court at its "last hearing." Only one further application, however, has been made under the Industrial Courts Act—in June, 1920, when no advance was conceded, and as the A.E.U., in

association with the Federation, withdrew from the February, 1917, agreement before September no further application has been made to the Court.

This arrangement, however, was not invariably followed, and in October the Federation held a conference on their own with the employers, when they preferred an application for an advance of 6d. per hour to all journeymen time workers, with equivalent percentage increases to pieceworkers, and 3d. per hour advance to all boys, this conference having been preceded by a previous meeting between the engineering employers and the Amalgamated Engineering Union, and was succeeded by further negotiations between the employers, the foundry trades, and the general workers—four separate conferences upon one uniform and general application—the ultimate result being that a further conference on the 16th December decided to mutually recommend a stabilisation of wages for the ensuing six months on existing rates and the appointment of a joint committee to consider (a) a basis for the settlement of wages fluctuations in future, and (b) unemployment, the same agreement being made with the other applicants.

We had, however, quite a number of local wage movements which were confined to our trade. One of the most promising was a series of local applications for increases in wages because of the increased cost of tools. The Employers' Federation suggested that these applications should be made the subject of a national agreement, and there is no doubt but that the employers were favourably disposed toward these applications. Their invitation to a conference was accepted, but the single issue was complicated with the general question of wages, also limitation of apprentices, limitation of overtime, and young journeymen's rates, the three latter questions having already been embodied in our rules. The result of the introduction of these complicated issues was that instead of one, five conferences were held. A flat negative was given to our three statutory limitations, and, as has already been noted, the question of wages was burdened with our acceptance of an agreement already in essence applied to the general engineering trade, which included our acceptance of the system of payment by results, and which was overwhelmingly turned down by a vote of our members, leaving us in precisely the

same position as we were before we entered into negotiations with the employers.

It is easy to be wise after the result, but it is quite evident we made a great mistake in not confining our negotiations with the employers to the single issue they raised. Their offer of the agreement of 28th April was coupled with the offer of an 8s. per week differential rate of wage. This meant an actual increase of 3s. 6d. or 4s. per week, by which sum our members are poorer to-day. Whilst we were negotiating with the engineering employers the joiners were carrying on similar negotiations with their shipbuilding confreres. Their claim on account of the increased price of tools is identical with ours, and formed the main plank of their programme. They had also what we had not, the advantage of a large and unsatisfied demand for house joiners at a much higher rate of wages than were being paid in the shipyards, and in April they received 12s. advance. This was withdrawn on December 4th, and resulted in a strike which lasted until August, 1921, the men going back on a reduction of 9s. in two instalments, the remaining 3s. to be made the subject of negotiations in December. The joiners are confident of retaining this 3s. on account of the increased cost of tools, from which we may safely infer that this amount is recognised by the employers as a reasonable recompense for the maintenance of a joiner's kit at the present enhanced prices, and it is quite justifiable for us to hold that the 8s. differential rate we so uncompromisingly rejected represented the amount added to our present differential, which the employers were prepared to regard as our due owing to the increased cost of tools. Just another point worthy of note. The great bulk of apprentice patternmakers have to provide their own tools, a grievous burden on their parents at the present prices. The shipbuilders offered to undertake to provide apprentice joiners with a full kit, which would be given to them at the completion of their apprenticeship. It is not unreasonable to conjecture that the engineering employers would have been prepared to make a similar offer to the apprentices to our trade had we been prepared to negotiate with them on the single issue. However, it is little use crying over spilt milk. What was done was undoubtedly done for the best, and it may be that these conclusions are quite unwarranted.

We were much more successful in our minor local movements than in our efforts to increase our general rates. Norwich secured an advance of 1s. 6d. per week owing to the abandonment of a bonus scheme for an enhanced rate of wages, which was dropped after a short trial. Lincoln obtained an advance of 2s. to their base rate, that amount being deducted from their bonus; so the advantage was somewhat in the dim and distant future, when bonus payments were wiped out. A real and substantial advantage was gained at Barnsley, where 3s. advance was granted, bringing their rate up to that of Sheffield, and thus ending a long-standing grievance. A notable success was achieved at Falkirk, where for many years we had vainly attempted to obtain Glasgow and Edinburgh rates. By the judicious use of an overtime embargo they succeeded in obtaining an advance of about 8s. 7d. per week, making their total rate £5 0s. 2d., the highest in Scotland, for which concession they relaxed their overtime restrictions with the condition that no overtime be worked if there was a member out of work in the district. Considerable concessions were also secured for apprentices, who obtained advances ranging from 2s. to 20s. per week, with an undertaking that full journeymen's rates be paid within two years of the completion of their apprenticeship instead of three years as had formerly been the case.

Our Yorkshire branches, as low-rated districts, obtained by negotiation with their respective employers 1s. per week advance in Leeds, Bradford, Wakefield, Huddersfield, and Halifax. In addition, Huddersfield received an additional 2s., which gave them a rate of 96s. 2½d. per week, making them the highest rated town in the West Riding. Keighley likewise obtained an advance of 2s. per week.

Bedford succeeded in getting 6s. per week advance, making their gross weekly earnings, including bonus, £5 7s. 10d., whilst our members at Melksham were offered and accepted an advance of 3s. per week. A movement for a general basis wage rate in Lancashire was successful after many years' unsuccessful striving. By arrangement with the local Employers' Federation advances of 2s. per week were obtained in Blackburn, Preston, Wigan, Burnley, and Chester; whilst 1s. was granted in Bury and St. Helens, these advances raising the rates to the Manchester standard.

Our Midland branches were not quite so successful in their effort to obtain Birmingham wage rates for Wolverhampton, Dudley, Darlaston, and Stafford. With this object, an application was made for an advance of 3s. per week, but only one-third of that amount was conceded. We were concerned in an interesting joint movement of the craftsmen employed in the steel works of the West of Scotland, which succeeded in obtaining a forty-four-hour week, to be paid as for forty-eight hours. A rather surprising clause in the agreement prohibited overtime even on breakdowns or repairs. An attempt was made to obtain an advance of wages of 2s. 9d. per week, which was refused, the employers offering a tonnage bonus scheme, which, in its turn, was rejected by the joint committee and was subsequently withdrawn by the employers on the ground of the rapid decline of trade—a clear case of events casting their shadows before them.

The unsatisfactory and misleading nature of the wages rate returns was so evident that an attempt was made to rectify the past apparent errors and present a reliable and correct statement in the Annual Report, the figures given purporting to include the 12½ per cent bonus. The wide discrepancies shown, however, are an indication that the attempt was unsuccessful. Letchworth, with £6 per week, heads the list. London rates are hopeless, ranging from £4 18s. 6d. at Erith to £5 12s. 10d. in London No. 1. Bolton returns £5 11s., whilst Manchester is seemingly content with £4 12s. 10d. South Shields give their rate at £4 1s. 11½d.; Jarrow at £4 12s. 2d., and so on. The average rate as given is understated; £4 13s. 1d. should be £4 14s. 8½d. This shows a considerable advance on the stated return for 1919, when our average, as given in Annual Report, worked out at £4 2s. 6d. per member. Neither figure, however, can be accepted as a reliable indication of our members' rates of wages.

During the year two attempts were made to induce the society to invest money in the "Daily Herald," a daily newspaper originally instituted in the interests of extreme Socialism, but which latterly devoted a considerable portion of its space to Trade Unionism. At one time it was the rival and critic of the ill-fated "Citizen," and upon the demise of that organ it became, to a certain extent, its successor, and

made, as it is making now, strong efforts to obtain capital from Trade Union organisations. A proposal that we invest £5,000 in this enterprise obtained 2,150 votes against 1,832, but as the E.C. decided that a two-thirds majority was necessary, the proposal was negatived, whilst a more moderate proposition that £2,000 be invested, which was voted upon later in the year, met with no better fate, 1,549 voting for, and 1,149 against the investment. We are now confining ourselves to urgent and sustained appeals for voluntary, moral, and financial support to this paper.

We did not at all times confine ourselves to matters which only concerned ourselves, and as evidence of our capacity to take a broad outlook over the industrial field, a vote was taken at all December, 1919, meetings with regard to the nationalisation of mines, when, naturally enough, by 1,811 to 121 votes, we declared in favour. Our members took a very languid interest in this question, two other votes taken at the same time receiving much larger aggregate votes. We also decided to support the Council of Action, a joint body representing the Trades Union Congress, the Labour Party, and the Parliamentary Labour Party, in any action they might take to prevent this country declaring for war, by 3,657 to 1,983 votes, taken at meetings specially summoned for that purpose. So when, if ever, that body functions, they are assured of our support, even to the extent of a stoppage of work.

We also carried by 1,898 to 580 votes a resolution to grant 1s. per member—£550—to the National Memorial of Freedom and Peace. This grandiloquent title covers a proposal to erect a central home for the governing bodies of the Trade Union and Labour Party, including a restaurant for Trade Union Workers, the whole scheme to form a memorial to those members of organisations who "sacrificed their lives and limbs on the altar of their faith and country." No indication is given as to who are responsible for this scheme, who are the trustees, or what support has been given or is likely to be given. However, at the time money had ceased to have any value to us as a society, and a majority of the few members who troubled to vote appeared ready to squander our funds on any wild-cat scheme which came along. Although it is stated that steps would be taken to give effect to the expressed

wishes of our members, it does not appear that we have paid over any money as yet.

The restrictions we had imposed on overtime were somewhat modified during the year owing to the lack of uniformity in our various districts at holiday times, the E.C. ruling "That it be understood that all days where extra pay is conceded should be recognised as overtime"; whilst in "West Wales," where we apparently had an embargo on all overtime, the E.C. agreed to allow work to be done in cases of breakdown to plant, etc., provided no patternmakers were available.

Objection was taken to the Government scheme for training disabled ex-Service men to our trade because of the fear that these men would be used as blacklegs in cases of strikes or lock-outs, and it was decided that our members should be withdrawn from all Advisory Committees in respect of the training scheme for these men, and also that they refuse to act as instructors unless satisfactory assurances were received from the Government on this point. This necessary undertaking was at once given, the Minister going so far as to express the hope that all trainees would qualify for full membership of the Trade Union.

In August the North-East Conciliation Board was dissolved by the vote of our local members, six months' notice being given of our withdrawal. The Board had been established for twenty-five years, and had obtained an increase in our differential rates of 2s. per week, as well as some concessions with regard to port rules, and the maintenance of our eighteen hours per month overtime restriction. At the beginning of the year application was made for an advance of 100 per cent. on our wages. The employers refused this application in view of the national negotiations. With considerable difficulty a conference was arranged, but the employers maintained their attitude and eventually offered piecework, which our side refused to consider. The result of the vote was that by 334 to 139 our members withdrew from the Board, their decision and reasons being deemed of sufficient importance to be communicated to the Press and to the Minister of Labour.

The first meeting of the Appeal Court under our new rules was held on September 24th. It was a small body consisting

of only three members, with the General President and Secretary. The business dealt with chiefly concerned protests from members who had transgressed the rules, chiefly in regard to working overtime, the decision of the E.C. being usually confirmed. It was also decided that the salaries of District Secretaries and Organisers be reviewed six months hence; the salaries of Organisers being fixed at not less than £6 per week, and that the E.C. be responsible for the entire furnishing of the room or offices of these officers. The cost of the day's meeting was £25 7s. 6d.

During the latter part of the year the industrial position in Belfast gave rise to considerable anxiety. There is always trouble there, actual or potential, between the opposing factions of Protestants and Catholics, but owing to the conditions in the South and West of Ireland, where the population were in open rebellion, the factions in Belfast broke out into open warfare. Workmen were chased and harried out of ship-yards, and it was not denied that in doubtful cases men were compelled to take an oath of allegiance to the Crown before they were permitted to work. This abominable embargo and persecution was made the subject of discussion and personal investigation by the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress and the Engineering and Shipbuilding Federation, who found the truth at the bottom of a much deeper well than they could penetrate, and it is questionable if their interference did more than to give them the opportunity of expressing the pious opinion that no other qualification for employment should be enforced other than the production of a paid-up Trade Union contribution card. It is to be noted that our members denied taking any measures to interfere with the employment of any of their fellow workmen, and that no member of our trade was compelled to take the oath of allegiance; but it cannot be denied that some of our members did lose their employment because of their religious professions, and received full Victimisation Benefit from our society.

Our delegates on society business considered the expenses of 15s. per day fixed by the Birmingham delegate meeting inadequate, and a resolution was placed before the members that the allowance be 20s., that being the figure fixed by the

A.E.U. The members agreed to this increase by 2,623 to 699 votes.

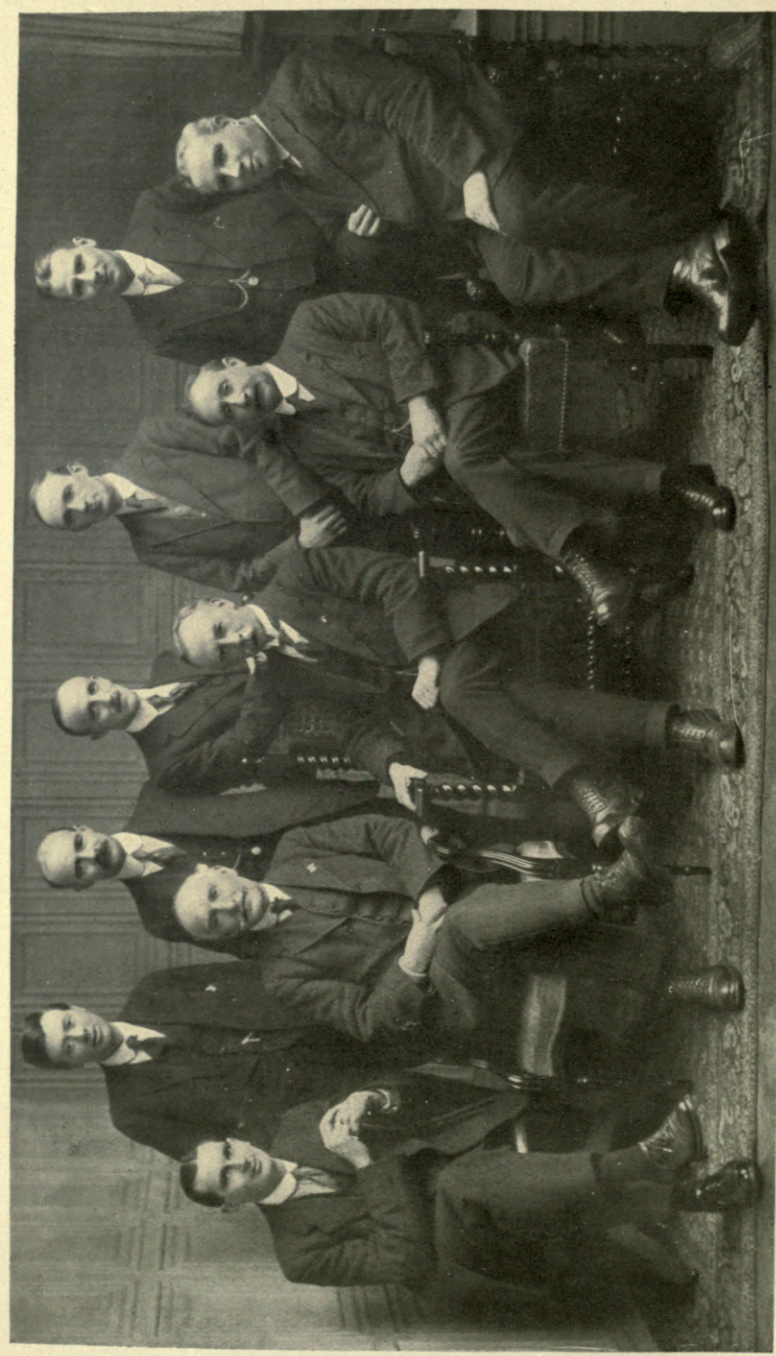
During the year badges were provided for such of our members as were willing to pay for them. So with a badge in our button-holes, an emblem—or its photographic counterpart—on our walls, and, best of all, a clear contribution card in our pockets, we certainly are now in a position to fulfil the requirements of the most exacting, up-to-date Trade Union protagonist.

During the year we added eight branches to our roll, of which number one-half meant breaking new ground. Our total branches at the end of the year numbered 123. Our membership continued to increase by leaps and bounds, the majority of our new entrants being apprentices, now admitted at 16 years of age, whilst an unusual number of Trade Protection members—fifty-four—joined our ranks. Our total admissions numbered 1,434, being 200 fewer than in 1919, and 293 members were excluded or resigned. Our gain for the year numbered 898, and our total membership at the end of the year was 12,566.

Our financial statements for the year easily constitute a series of records. Our income reached the substantial figure of £67,865, or £5 6s. 1½d. per member, being £1,900 in the aggregate and 17s. per member in excess of the figures of the previous year. This large increase was due to the increase in our contributions under the new rules, amounting to 1d. per member per week, and would realise something like £2,500. Our enhanced income per member did not entail so substantial a drain upon their resources as is indicated in the foregoing figures, over £7,000 accruing to the funds as interest on our investments, and in addition we had payments from the National Insurance of nearly £8,000.

Our expenditure was very heavy, considering the state of trade throughout the year, and reached £40,963, or £3 5s. 2½d. per member, nearly £6,000, or 5s. 1d. per member in excess of the previous year's figures. Our gain for the year was, however, a very substantial one, and amounted to £26,902, which exceeded our total income at so recent a date as 1911. Our total balance at the end of 1920 amounted to £201,223, or £16 0s. 3d. per member, which,

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, 1921.



G. BUCHANAN.	D. W. LLOYD JAMES.	J. S. BROWN.	D. GRAY.	N. BLACKBURN.
D. MATHER.	A. FINDLAY.	A. E. WARDALE.	J. MILLS.	H. TAYLOR.

without being too dogmatic in our prophecies, is probably the highest point we, or, for the matter of fact, any other national Trade Union organisation, will ever attain.

Notwithstanding the fact that our Trade Benefit had been increased some 50 per cent., we spent nearly £600 less than in 1919, our total expenses on this account amounting to £5,220, or 8s. 3½d. per member. Sick Benefit, however, which had been similarly increased, showed a much higher rate of expenditure than in 1919. During the twelve months under review our Sick and ancillary benefits amounted to £14,033, or £1 2s. 3½d. per member, nearly £3,000 more than during the previous year, the difference per member being 3s. 1d. Management showed an enormous increase over all previous records, no less than £15,097, or £1 4s. 0½d. per member being spent on administration. If a test of progressiveism is an excessive expenditure on management, we can easily claim to be in the very front rank, and it is doubtful if another society otherwise comparable with our own can show figures equalling our record. The modest 7s. or 10s. per member which our administrative expenses used to cost pale into insignificance when compared with our present-day figures, and for almost the first time in our history management heads the list of our expenditure. The chief causes of these enhanced costs are due to increase in General Office salaries £400, Executive £550, District Committee £735, whilst branch secretaries, treasurers, and other officers all help to swell the list. The extra amount we spent owing to the new rules was £4,000, or 5s. 2d. per member. If the members at large who have to foot the bill are satisfied that they are getting value for their money, there is nothing more to be said, and our old-time members who built up the organisation chiefly by voluntary efforts and sought no other reward than to see a steady growth of members, funds, and influence must bring what philosophy they can muster to bear with toleration and patience an order of things which they would have regarded as demoralising and impossible in their day and generation. Tool Insurance showed a considerable increase, the £567 spent on this benefit being the largest in our history. Superannuation showed its usual upward tendency, and now costs us 4s. 7½d. per member, a trifle less than our Assistance Fund expenditure, which, amounting to £3,013, included

grants of £1,120 to the Friendly Society of Ironfounders and £500 to the National Amalgamated Furnishing Trades Association on account of a prolonged strike they had in the piano industry. We also made a grant of £25 towards the funds of the National League of the Blind Trade Union for no other apparent reason than that they asked for it.

It may be as well to record that at the end of July, 1920, the fusion of the various engineering trades took place under the title of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, the familiar abbreviation, the A.S.E., being superseded by the A.E.U. The only two national engineering societies remaining outside were ours and the Electrical Trades Union, whose majority for amalgamation was the largest, but who failed to secure the necessary 50 per cent. vote of their total membership.

1921.

This fateful year opened with but little indication of the conditions which would apply to industry during the ensuing twelve months. Trade generally was fair. We closed the previous year with 226 members out of work, which number increased to 381 by the end of January. The miners' strike, which lasted thirteen weeks and commenced on April 1st, certainly dislocated trade, and the number of our unemployed members went up by leaps and bounds. A strike of shipyard joiners against the withdrawal of 12s. per week tool money, which commenced in September and continued for some seven months, had a disturbing effect, and it was felt that as soon as the industrial position had cleared trade would return to its normal position, and that the leeway to be made up would create a demand which would absorb the greater proportion of those who had been suspended or discharged during the earlier months of the year. Far from these optimistic expectations being realised, trade went from bad to worse, and at the end of May we had passed the 3,000 mark, and that number, with slight variations, has steadily increased, and at the end of the year reached the enormous total of 3,811, only four small branches showing a clear vacant book, whilst one branch—Barrow—shows just upon 70 per cent. of its total members as being out of work, and our average over the whole society for this month reaches the enormous proportion of 30 per cent. It is as well to note that we are

rather worse circumstanced in this matter than our contemporaries, the A.U.E. recording a percentage of 25.86 of their members idle in their December Report, and it is significant that at this period unemployment amongst Trade Unions rose to 15.9 per cent., and to 15.7 per cent. among workpeople in insured trades !

As might be readily conjectured, the hopeless industrial position raised the question of increased benefit to our unemployed members, and as early as February an intimation was made through the Monthly Report that any member in this position could apply for a consideration of his claim under the new Unemployment Insurance Bill (?) This was amended in a subsequent Report, and the burden of increased benefits was placed on the Assistance Fund. However, it was evidently found out that a scheme of special individual grants was unworkable, and the E.C. decided to augment the benefit of ten-year members to 23s. per week, however long they had been out of employment, and other free members had their benefit advanced to 20s. per week, Trade Protection and non-free members receiving an additional 5s. per week ; these payments to continue for fourteen weeks and to commence from the end of the first quarter. A further and statutory increase of benefit to Trade Protection and apprentice members, in order to allow this class of member to draw his State Benefit from our society, was submitted to a vote, and needless to say, was carried by an overwhelming majority, 2,550 voting for, and 13 against. As an offset against this increased benefit—5s. and 2s. 6d. per week respectively, the contributions were increased by 4s. 4d. per year to Trade Protection and 2s. 2d. to apprentice members, the rule being altered accordingly.

A significant return prepared by the Clyde District Committee is worthy of record : " In the 129 shops returned, 832 members are employed at the moment, as compared with 1,142 in normal times. The number of hours worked per week is 33,475½. There are fifty-nine shops working full time and sixty-seven on short time"—28th October, 1921.

The E.C. decided to regularise the position with regard to ordinary members by taking a vote as to the continuance of the Assistance Grant, and intimated the necessity for an increased contribution " to prevent a too drastic reduction of

our balance." This vote was twice postponed in order to ascertain the full extent of our obligations from the quarterly reports, but the extra allowances were continued, and in addition a provision was made for the payment of Strike and Lock-out Pay, which probably breaks all records. Our rules provide for a Contingent Grant of 1s. per day to members in this position, which gives a maximum of 24s. per week. This amount can be augmented from Assistance Fund at the discretion of the E.C., who were in such generous mood that they intimated an all-in payment of 43s. and 40s. per week to members on dispute, the idea being to pay the same amount as an unemployed member would receive from the society and the National Insurance Act, and this payment was maintained at the maximum through the ever-helpful and apparently bottomless Assistance Fund as long as a strike lasted. The payment to both unemployed and dispute members was reduced to 38s. and 35s. per week, when, in November, State Unemployment Benefit was fixed at 15s. instead of 20s. per week.

The vote submitted to the members for a continuance of the enhanced Out-of-Work Benefit proposed that the contributions be raised to 2s. 6d. per week for a period of six months, this limitation being imposed by rule, and was carried by 2,647 to 599 votes, so we went back to our old system of levies, although the last revision of rules meeting declared in favour of an inclusive contribution and the abolition of all levies. The circumstance, however, of permanently increased benefit rendered this step inevitable, and certainly no one could have anticipated when the rule was altered the awful collapse of trade within the short space of eighteen months.

The decision of our members to levy themselves in support of their unemployed fellows is in accordance with the highest traditions of our race to "to bear one another's burdens." We can vapour to our hearts content about the accursed system under which we live, which seems to some of our members to breed only millionaires and paupers, we may—and do—make the most persistent and frantic appeals to end this system by investing in the "Daily Herald" and returning Labour representatives to all elective public bodies, and some of our members may be so simple as to honestly believe

that we would have a new heaven and a new earth if a Labour Government were installed in St. Stephens, but, after all, the acid test is not what we say but what we do to help the lame dog over a stile. Our members have nobly and generously responded to that test by affirming their willingness to pay 8d. per week to grant a living allowance to every idle member in our society, and their self-denial is enhanced by the fact that a large proportion of our working members are working systematic short time and their net earnings must be little, if any, better than the 43s. or 40s. per week which is being drawn by our ten-year and free members at the present time.

Whilst we assume full credit to ourselves for this tangible expression of our sympathies, tempered and no doubt partly attributable to the fact that the payers do not know the moment when they become drawers, there is a logical and constitutional side to this question which, however unpopular and harsh it may appear, should not be overlooked. Is it morally right and legally justifiable to double a member's legal benefits because of an abnormal trade depression? If it is right to do so because 4,000 members are idle why should we not do so when 400 or 40 are on the books? The suffering of the unit is none the less because of the fact that his experiences are being shared by the community, and it is undoubtedly true that when trade is normal and our unemployed roll is limited to a few hundreds there is invariably a certain proportion of that number who have been out of work sufficiently long to qualify for the lower scale of Trade Benefit. There, again, are we not making a rod to beat our own back? We have established the precedent that the rules regarding benefits are indefinitely elastic and that an elective National Executive may ride rough shod over our constitution with impunity, being perfectly assured that to do so in the direction of increasing benefits will immensely increase their popularity and will be approved by such of our members as take the trouble to attend their branch meetings and record their votes. Further, is it fair or politic to tax that beast of burden, the paying member, more than he is able or willing to endure? We are a very wealthy society, but during the last year we have lost a good many of our pinions, and another twelve months of our experiences during the past nine months

will prove a severe, and maybe a fatal, strain upon our resources, and it is as well that we occasionally remember that we have entered into commitments to our members of a very serious and far-reaching character, and these members who have borne the heat and burden of the day have every right to expect that their legal claims as laid down in the rule shall be met before grants are made, which may be morally justified but have no legal authority.

After all, a bargain is a bargain: The society contracts to pay a certain scale of benefits for a certain rate of contributions. So far as Sick, Funeral, and Superannuation Benefit is concerned that scale is rigidly adhered to, and it certainly appears anomalous that the recipient of one particular benefit who is not subject to the physical and economic disabilities which have to be endured by our sick and infirm members should be placed in so much better a position, for the simple reason that he exists in much larger numbers, can and must attend his branch meeting, and is in consequence in a better position to make his demands heard than these unfortunates who have not these advantages, but whose necessities may be infinitely greater than his more numerous and clamorous fellows.

What the result of the present levy will have upon our paying members it is premature to discuss. The levy has only run three months, but there is no present indication that it is having any ill-effect upon our membership. If this turns out to be the case, all the more credit is due to our paying members, especially as they have before them the example of larger societies who imposed levies upon their members with the same object, but who had to cancel or modify them owing to the number of exclusions which followed their imposition. It is a matter for sincere thankfulness that we have been able to meet our indebtedness up to the present, and have every prospect of doing so for a considerable time to come, especially in view of the fact that every general union paying Unemployment Benefit has had to reduce or stop payment, whilst most of the societies representing skilled workmen are in little better case. We have only once before had to suspend payment, and that only in three or four districts. The experience is one we trust we will not have to repeat.

In this connection it may be noted that our valuation in the scheme of State Sickness Insurance allowed a slight increase in our scale of benefits. Sick Benefit was raised from 15s. to 16s. per week, and Maternity Benefit was increased from £2 to £2 2s., and 6d. was added to Disablement Benefit—7s. 6d. to 8s.

Considerable prominence was given in the early part of the year to a pamphlet dealing with poor law relief. It is to be hoped that these instructions were for information only and were not intended as an exhortation to our 600 idle members to throw themselves on the charity of the poor law guardians.

The depression in trade did not altogether extinguish our efforts to obtain improved conditions. In January our members were warned that the overtime restrictions were still in being, with certain stated exceptions. As we followed other trades in respect of these restrictions, it will be interesting to note how long we will continue the farce of maintaining an embargo which is neither general nor operative, which has penalised more of our members than it has benefited, and which has been practically abandoned by its authors—the A.E.U.

Disputes took place at various firms in consequence of the employers enforcing or anticipating unauthorised reductions. Stoppages of work occasionally took place, but these troubles seem to have been adjusted with but little delay. From the meagre information given, an outsider is justified in asking why these adjustments were not made before a stoppage actually took place. Thus in Stafford the local District Committee "had to declare a dispute," and our members were warned not to accept work at this firm. No indication is given as to causes or extent until the next month, when the said authority states the dispute, which was apparently caused through wages and bonus, was over. After all, our members are not like a flock of sheep, to be herded out and kept away without knowing why, and it appears in these matters that the fullest publicity should be given to all trade movements in the most prominent part of our Report, and certainly should not be hidden away in the report of a local District Committee.

Numerous disputes took place from time to time regarding the payment of bonus as provided in the local agreement

between our society and the federated employers. Quite a disposition seems to have been evinced by some employers to revert to plain time rates, which was strenuously objected to by our members, who a short time previously had damned any other system with bell, book, and candle. It is not apparent whether we succeeded in reinstating the accursed system of payment by result, although strikes did take place in Bolton and Ramsbottom, with what result we are not informed. The whole subject would be ridiculous were it not tragic. We have a majority of our members working on a system other than plain time rates. Most of those who are not doing so are simply the victims of circumstances. At all times the bonus workers are prepared to go to any length to maintain the system in every instance. Where we have asked the members to express their views they have condemned the principle of payment by result, and by a substantial majority we have refused to penalise any member who works it. We have members adopting every subterfuge to prevent the society from ascertaining the extent and character of these extra payments, but we know usually by the squabbles which arise owing to the variation or withdrawal of a bonus that it has penetrated into almost every important district where our members are employed, and the tragedy of the whole situation is that our members who still work time rates can, or could have had, a differential rate of 8s. in excess of fitters and turners' rates, representing an advance on present rates of from 2s. to 6s. per week, if they formally accepted a system which is being generally worked in most of our various districts. Truly, if we wish to preserve our mental equilibrium during these desperate times we should pray for the saving gift of humour.

Our own disputes during the year which were of a very minor character, were varied by a sympathetic strike of our members in a Clyde shop, where the moulders were at loggerheads with the firm. Two new features appeared in this dispute, first, the initiative was taken by the Clyde District Committee, who requested our members to hand in their notices, and second, the Moulders' Society appealed to our local authority for their active participation, our own Executive apparently not appearing in the picture. This, so far as our records are concerned, is the first occasion upon which

we have struck work because of a grievance which concerned only another trade, and it is to be hoped that if ever a reciprocal dispute is declared by another trade on our behalf, that due prominence will be given to it in our report.

A somewhat novel movement was undertaken by the engineering trades in respect of apprentices' wages. It was stated that drastic cuts in their wages had been made, and as they are freely admitted to the Trade Unions, the latter organisations considered that they were justified in taking up the cudgels on their behalf. For a considerable time, however, the employers refused to discuss this question with the unions on the ground that the conditions of employment, so far as minors were concerned was a matter between the boys' parents and guardians and themselves. Now they appear to be in a more amenable frame of mind, and have intimated their willingness to meet the unions regarding apprentices at an early date. It appears, however, that they are prepared to discuss continuous employment, training, and such-like questions, and that the real point at issue, *viz.*, wages, may be a forbidden topic. It is interesting to note that our Clyde District Committee convened a meeting of apprentices in Glasgow, where it was resolved to ask the E.C. to request the Engineering and Shipbuilding Federation to take up the general question.

By far the most important question during the past year was that dealing with reductions in wages. It is safer to say that a demand for a substantial reduction was as expected as it was unwelcome. The amount demanded was 6s. per week; the 12½ per cent. Churchill bonus, together with any extra advances secured over the 26s. 6d. granted as war advances; pieceworkers were asked to submit to a 15 per cent. reduction, together with the 7½ per cent., and certain other extra payments made to some of the trades who had been in a position to enforce these special advances during the war period.

The first conference in which we were concerned was held between the Engineering Employers' Federation and the Federation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades, and was resultless, as was inevitable when a sectional discussion on a national issue was under consideration. The real business

was tackled when the organisations representing the workmen concerned decided to merge, and a conference held in London on 22nd April, 1921, was fully representative of the workmen's interests, consisting, as it did, of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, the Federaton of Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades, the National Foundry Workers, and the National Federation of General Workers.

At that conference the employers modified their demands somewhat, and proposed a reduction of 3s. per week and $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., to operate on the first full pay following June 16th, and four weeks later a similar reduction to take place. The workmen's side agreed not to recommend the acceptance of these proposals, this recommendation being subsequently confirmed by the various Executives. A further suggestion by the representatives of the trades concerned, that the Ministry of Labour be approached with a view to an inquiry under the Industrial Courts Act, was not approved by our E.C., a majority of whom considered such an effort to be "a waste of time and useless procedure."

A further proposal to soften the proposal was that the last instalment of the $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. be taken off in October. This concession was similarly unacceptable to the men's representatives. It may be noted that the employers refused to associate themselves in the request for a Court of Inquiry, which, however, could have been held without their acquiescence, had the Minister of Labour chosen to exercise his powers. However, both sides had interviews with the Minister, who failed to obtain any modification of the employers' demands.

A joint meeting of the workmen's delegates met in York on June 9th, and after a review of the situation passed a resolution advising each affiliated E.C. to instruct their members not to return to work on and after the date fixed by employers for the reduction to come into operation, viz., 16th June. The Shipbuilding Employers' Federation and the unions concerned had already agreed to accept 6s. and 15 per cent. reduction, to come off in two instalments. It was proposed that this settlement should apply to the engineers, but was rejected by the employers, who submitted an elaborate scale of proposed reductions, to which the workmen's representatives advised their members to give their most serious

consideration to, and the purport of which was that the 12½ per cent. be taken off in three monthly instalments, beginning the first pay in July; that 3s. come off time rates in October, and 3s. off war bonus of 26s. 6d. when the cost of living falls to 115 per cent, but not before the first full pay in November. The aggregate vote is not given, but apparently these proposals were turned down, our own vote being: For acceptance, 2,788; against, 4,392.

Further negotiations and conferences were held as a result of the efforts of the Minister of Labour, after the position seemed hopeless, and the final terms obtainable from the employers were submitted to a further ballot vote. They differed little from those already rejected. The proposal was that a reduction of 3s. be made 15th July, and a similar amount be taken off on August 15th, whilst the 12½ per cent. be reviewed at a further conference to be held in September. These terms were accepted by the trades, only one small society showing a majority against. Our vote was 4,322 for acceptance, and 1,803 against.

The final stage in the negotiations was reached when the conferences regarding the Ministry of Munitions bonuses were resumed on 21st, 22nd, and 23rd September and 6th, 7th, and 10th October, the ultimate result of which was a peremptory demand by the employers that the 12½ per cent. and 7½ per cent. bonus be withdrawn in three equal instalments, on the 12th October, November, and December. The unions were equally insistent on the reductions being regulated in accordance with the decrease in the cost of living. The employers remaining obdurate, the men's representatives offered to submit the employers' proposal to a ballot vote without any recommendation. This was not agreed to, and the employers intimated their intention to withdraw their proposals of the reduction on the instalment system and to insist upon the full reduction being exacted, and as an agreement seemed impossible negotiations were broken off at this point.

The unions again approached the Minister of Labour, who succeeded in bringing the two parties together once more, and the bickering recommenced in the same groove as before, until the employers gave their final ultimatum that these

bonuses be withdrawn in equal instalments on 1st November, 1st December, and 1st January. They also intimated that notices to this effect would be posted forthwith. This conference took place on October 6th, and after a full consideration, it was decided to ballot the unions without a recommendation. This decision, however, was modified when it was ascertained that the shipbuilding employers had made the same offer to the shipbuilding trades.

The two sections of the trade then met together and resolved to "recommend that the organisations represented take a ballot vote of their membership whether they are in favour of accepting the employers' terms, and to emphasise that the non-acceptance of these terms means a stoppage of work. Having regard to all the circumstances, the membership of the various unions are requested to give this matter their serious consideration." A welcome innovation was the publication in our Monthly Report of the total vote, which was as follows:—

	For.	Against
Engineering and Shipbuilding Federation	49,595	47,312
Amalgamated Engineering Union	48,976	66,682
Foundry Trades Federation	13,601	6,805
National Federation of General Workers	58,299	26,837
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	170,471	147,636

Majority in favour of acceptance, 22,835.

Our own vote was: For, 3,725; against, 2,632; majority, 1,093. It will be noted that the scale was turned by the vote of the National Federation of General Workers, and not for the first time have the unskilled workmen acted as a feather bed for the skilled trades to fall on, although it is inconceivable that had the labourers' vote been ignored the craft unions would have sanctioned a strike on a majority of 8,627 votes. The issue, having been decided in proper constitutional fashion, was accepted by the trades concerned without further demur, although it would be exceedingly difficult to find one employer connected with the industry who could say that these reductions, amounting to some 16s. per week to skilled workers, have had the slightest influence in strengthening trade, which, at the moment of writing, is worse than has been experienced in the history of the engineering and shipbuilding industry.



GENERAL OFFICE STAFF.

As an offset to these drastic and national reductions, we have some few local adjustments to record. An old standing grievance in the Midlands has been the different rates paid to our trade in what industrially was one district. This was rectified, so far as Wolverhampton was concerned, by the employers limiting the general reduction of 3s. to one-third of that amount. In the district of which Gloucester is the centre the employers were induced to recognise a differential rate of 2s. above fitters' rate. This meant an addition to our rates of 1s. to 3s. per week in some of these outlying districts.

At a firm in Middlesbrough an advance of 2s. 5d. per week was secured to our members. On the North-East Coast we succeeded in legalising, by agreement with the employers, the practice of a two-hour grinding time or pay on discharge. This record of the advantages we gained during the year is certainly the most meagre ever chronicled in our history. Still it shows that under the most depressing circumstances occasional opportunity offered to obtain trifling concessions.

Our interest in the question of railway shopmen's wages is very slight, but we have been concerned in the movement through the Engineering and Shipbuilding Federation, and the story of that movement is a melancholy one. There are three organisations representing railway shopmen—the National Union of Railwaymen, the Amalgamated Engineering Union, and the Federation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades. The grievance of which the men complain is that they are generally paid below district rates. In a few districts, however, the line rates are in excess of the district rates. The N.U.R., representing the bulk of the unskilled workmen, wish an increase of the line rates. The other two organisations are agitating for the recognition of district rates to skilled workmen, the A.E.U. stipulating that where line exceed district rates the major rate shall not be interfered with. While the railway companies were under Government control they intimated their willingness to recognise district rates, but stipulated that no exception must be made to its application. They also, and rightly, insisted that one settlement must cover the whole of the workmen, and agreed that where one definite issue had been agreed to, if they could not see their way to accept it, the question be submitted to arbitration. Attempts were then made to get the three organisations into

line. Ultimately the N.U.R. accepted the position of an application for district rates, but the A.E.U. declined to associate with them on the ground that they represent unskilled workmen, although they have long ago conceded this point so far as general engineering negotiations and settlements are concerned. The Federation have coalesced with the N.U.R. and are trying to obtain a settlement by arbitration, but so long as the A.E.U. hold aloof it would be a case of Hamlet without the Prince. There the matter rests, and owing to the failure of the organisations to agree to act together, hundreds of railway operatives are being deprived of an increased rate of from 1s. to 5s. per week.

A conference of woodworking trades was held during the year to apparently consider some question relating to closer unity. It does not transpire what societies were represented, as the information given only relates to ours and the Woodworkers' Society. Nothing apparently came of it. The first clause insisted upon by the Woodworkers' Society, stipulating that all systems other than time rates be abolished in pattern-making, which was enough to scotch whatever proposals were made at the conference. A suggestion for an interchange of cards with the Joiners made on the North-East Coast was probably due to the conference. Had effect been given to these suggestions the advantage would have been wholly on our side, as it is impossible to even imagine that a joiner would attempt to gain an entry into our trade at this time—a strange reversal of our previous experience. It is stated that the Joiners' E.C. were quite prepared to come to an agreement with us provided we abolished payment by results from our association and expel any member working on such system. It is to be regretted that the references to this interesting episode are so meagre as to preclude any fuller account of what might have meant the throwing open of two important woodworking trades to the members of either organisation.

Our uncertain outlook and rapidly growing financial responsibilities did not stem the current of our lavish generosity. We granted £1,000 to the "Daily Herald" Save the (Miners') Children Fund, which amount we supplemented by a further grant of £500, and then when trade was desperately bad with us in November we handed the balance from a Council of

Action levy—no amount stated—with a further grant of £25, to the fund for the relief of the famine districts of Russia. There is no indication that any branch suggested these payments, and no vote of the members was taken. At the time the latter grant was made an intimation was given that no further advances would be made to our own members to assist them in acquiring a house for their own occupation, the reason being that all our available ready money was required for the payment of benefits.

It is pleasing to record that when the members were given an opportunity to control expenditure they realised that a limit should be placed somewhere. Thus, the London district was extremely anxious to aspire to the dignity of a full-paid Organiser, but they were not willing to pay one-half of the cost of such a luxury as provided by rule, so they proposed to alter the rule so that the entire cost should be borne by the society. This the members refused to do by 2,366 to 675 votes, although by an overwhelming majority they raised the salaries of branch officers in connection with their duties under the National Insurance Act. It is also good to note that the Appeal Court—a national body of three members, who are bound by rule to meet four times per annum to hear appeals—voluntarily decided to ignore the rule, and when there was no business the rule should be quietly ignored, and that any appeals should be dealt with yearly.

The E.C. appears to have got to loggerheads with one of our Sheffield members regarding the interpretation of a paragraph in our rules which is no more than a pious opinion and certainly is not a registered rule. Whatever the issue was, it was apparently carried into the law courts, with what result is not stated. This little flutter cost us over £90, which appears to be a stiff price to pay for a quotation from Burns.

Strenuous efforts were made during the year to induce our members to invest their superfluous capital in the "Daily Herald," the E.C. even offering the shining example of their own practical sympathy, all but one of their number having sunk capital in this venture. It is to be hoped that the response was commensurate with the amount we spent in these gratuitous advertisements.

Turning from our policy and achievements as a trade organisation to a brief record of our statistical position. Our numerical progress was something of a disappointment. At the end of 1920 we had 12,566 members, which number had increased to 12,773 at the close of last year—a net gain of 207 as compared with a gain in membership of 898 in 1920. In fact, we have to go back to 1913 to find so small a numerical gain as was recorded last year. It is some consolation, however, to know that we fared much better than our nearest contemporary, the A.E.U., having lost over 30,000 in their numbers during the same period. Our total admissions numbered 649, as compared with a total of 1,434 admitted during 1920. Exclusions numbered 444, compared with 293 the year previous. It is interesting to note that of our total membership 10,710 are included for political purposes, and are having 1s. per annum deducted from their contributions for political purposes. The disappointment we must naturally feel at our slow progress in membership last year will be considerably mitigated if we are assured that all or practically all eligible to join us have done so. If this is so, we should be thankful that the entrants to our trade are slackening off, and that it is being generally recognised that we are probably the most overstaffed trade in the engineering industry, and if no more apprentices were made during the next five years there are still plenty of men to fill every requirement of the trade for many years to come.

Our financial operations during 1921 were by far the most sensational in our history. We commenced the year with the largest balance per member probably ever held by any national society in the Trade Union movement. It was somewhat uncertain as to amount, so it will be safe to indicate the lesser amount shown in our accounts of £200,588, or just under £16 per member, and as our gain for 1920 had amounted to £27,000, there was some justification for the apparent opinion of our E.C. and the members at large for thinking that our resources were practically limitless, and the policy of the society was shaped accordingly. Our income for the year from all sources amounted to £55,701, being £12,164 less than our income for 1920, this falling off being due to the large number of members who were unemployed, and consequently exempt from all payments, and to the

decrease in our revenue from interest, due to the necessity of calling in our investments. Our total expenditure reached the enormous sum of £140,538, or just about £100,000 more than our outgoings during 1920. As a matter of fact, the amount we spent last year is so much more than we ever disbursed before as to make comparisons impossible. This will be the better realised from the amount spent per member, which last year amounted to £11. The year previous we spent £3 5s. 2½d. per member, and our record before 1921 was when our expenditure amounted to £4 18s. 1½d. per member in 1908. As might be anticipated, Trade Benefit accounted for the lion's share of our expenditure, which for this purpose amounted to £71,102, or over £5 11s. per member, as compared with 8s. 3½d. in 1920 and £3 10s. 4½d. in 1908, but this huge amount did not by any means exhaust our self-imposed liability to our out-of-work members. We have in Rule 25 a means of paying mass supplemental benefits which it is probable has no parallel in the Trade Union movement, but if words mean anything the whole purport of the rule is that Assistance Benefit is granted on an individual basis; it was easier and more popular to regard all our out-of-work members as being in reduced circumstances; all were paid Assistance Benefit at a total cost of £37,695, or nearly £3 per member, so each of our unemployed members received on the average £8 11s., and this at a time when a number of contemporary societies had been compelled to reduce or abolish altogether this, and, in fact, all other benefits. Our expenditure for Sick and Funeral Benefit is given as £10,767, or over £3,000 less than was paid in 1920. Superannuation Benefit showed a slight reduction, £2,819 being paid for this purpose last year, as compared with £2,894 in 1920. No reduction in our management costs was apparently possible, the total cost amounting to £15,075, a few pounds less than the year previous, so whatever the uses of the Geddes Axe it apparently is not intended to operate in the Trade Union movement.

During the year we sustained an apparent loss of £84,837, and our balance sheet shows the still substantial sum of £115,751, or £9 1s. per member, enough in all conscience to meet any financial strain we might reasonably be called upon to bear, but our actual experiences far transcend any

imaginings we indulged in at the beginning of the year; our unemployed roll has not diminished; we have become involved in the engineering lock-out, which has thrown an additional 2,652 members on our books; our funds have melted at an incredible rate, and writing the last week in May our balance at the moment has diminished by one-half, notwithstanding the fact that our E.C., by a display of resolution and forethought, which qualities it would have been wise had they exercised a year ago, have abolished statutory benefits by stopping Strike Pay as well as the exceedingly problematical Assistance Benefit, and limited all benefits to the ordinary trade scale with a minimum of 10s. per week. Our contributions have been increased by 8d. per week to 2s. 6d., and our funds having sunk below the £5 per member limit imposed by rule, a further quite insufficient increase in contribution of 1s. per week has been added.

Our financial position is bad enough in all conscience, but our industrial outlook is even worse. We have the engineering trade again split into two camps, each desperately anxious that the other should accept the odium and responsibility of a settlement of the lock-out, with the general Trade Unions hovering in the background declaring that they will not relinquish any work to which they have been accustomed and demanding the right of the semi-skilled machinist to promotion. Were the lock-out to be settled to-morrow trade is still desperately bad with but little sign of returning prosperity. Then we have the wages and payment by result questions, which the Engineering Employers' Federation have plainly and repeatedly stated must be settled, and their position has been enormously strengthened by the acceptance of a reduction of 16s. 6d. per week in the twin industry of shipbuilding and in several sections of the engineering trade not governed by the Engineering Employers' Federation, but in spite of these untoward circumstances, our outlook is not altogether black; by the somewhat belated husbanding of our resources we will be able to pay our present benefits for many months to come, and whilst the effect of the recent advance in our contributions has not been felt yet, there is no reason to fear that we will suffer any serious loss of membership. We have held our own up to the moment, and we believe that the great bulk of our members have sufficient grit and

tenacity to recognise that the best is being done on their behalf. The position in our trade is due wholly to external circumstances, and most important of all we believe that the principles of Trade Unionism—or, in other words, of mutual assistance in all our difficulties—are quite sufficient to keep an intelligent and self-respecting body of men faithful to the obligations they entered into when they voluntarily joined our organisation.

1922.

The depressed condition of trade which had continued throughout 1921 showed no sign of improvement with the dawn of the new year; a slight diminution in the number of our unemployed members was noticeable, but little consolation was to be derived from this circumstance in view of the fact that 28 per cent. of our total membership were signing the vacant book, and if we deduct sick and superannuated members, together with apprentices and members not working at the trade, it is no exaggeration to state that during the earlier months of the year over one-third of our adult working membership were out of work through bad trade.

Owing to this circumstance our general financial condition was such as to cause considerable anxiety to our governing body. Hitherto our funds had been looked upon as an inexhaustible reservoir, to which all comers were made welcome. The losses we had sustained during the previous year, however, had given pause to our E.C., who decided to terminate the 5s. per week supplemental assistance grant which had been made to our members in receipt of Trade Benefit at the end of the March quarter. A further minor saving was effected by a vote of the society when our representation on national bodies was reduced from four to three. This saving was comparatively trifling, but the majority—3,279 to 749—indicates that the members at large were beginning to think that the time for a tightening of the purse strings was somewhat overdue. A further proposal for the revision of General Office salaries, which had hitherto been advanced at the same time and rate as the cost-of-living bonuses granted to our trade, was made, but its development and result does not belong to this history.

By far the most important crisis which has hitherto affected the engineering trade culminated in a lock-out of the members of the A.E.U. on the question of "Managerial Functions" on March 11th. The questions in dispute were manifold, embracing overtime, manning of machines, relations between employers and their apprentices, wages, etc., and negotiations had been going on between the A.E.U. and the Engineering Employers' Federation from the beginning of 1921. In November the two parties got to grips, and at a conference held on the 17th and 18th of that month the following memorandum was arrived at:—

" I.—GENERAL.

" 1. The Trade Union shall not interfere with the right of the employers to exercise managerial functions in their establishments, and Federations shall not interfere with the proper functions of the Trade Union.

" 2. In the exercise of these functions the parties shall have regard to the Provisions for Avoiding Disputes of 17th April, 1914, which are amplified by the shop stewards and works committee agreement of 20th May, 1919, and to the terms of other national and local agreements between the parties.

" 3. Instructions of the management shall be observed pending any question in connection therewith being discussed in accordance with the provisions referred to.

II.—OVERTIME.

" It is agreed that in terms of the overtime and night-shift agreement of the 29th and 30th September, 1920, the employers have the right to decide when overtime is necessary, the workpeople or their representatives being entitled to bring forward under the provisions referred to any case of overtime they desire discussed. Meantime, the overtime required shall be proceeded with."

These proposals were recommended for acceptance by the E.C. of the A.E.U., but were rejected by a ballot vote of the members, 35,525 voting in favour of acceptance and 50,240 against, and that vote has been accepted as a mandate by the governing body of the society in all the subsequent negotiations with the employers as well as with the other trades concerned, and the various authorities representing the

Government, who have concerned themselves in trying to bring about a settlement of the lock-out.

Up to the point when the A.E.U. vote was taken we as a society were not concerned with the dispute, nor had we taken any part in the negotiations, but immediately the policy of the society concerned had been decided upon and notices of a lock-out had been intimated the employers communicated with the other trades connected with engineering and asked them to attend a conference in order to ascertain their position with regard to the impending struggle. This conference was held in London on March 2nd, the organisations representing the allied trades being the Federation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades, the National Union of Foundry Workers, and the National Federation of General Workers. There were also five small societies outside these bodies who were invited to attend. The position was fully stated by the President of the Employers' Federation, and an intimation was given that the lock-out notice given to the A.E.U. would apply to the other trades unless they were prepared to sign the memorandum rejected by the A.E.U. The employers gave the allied trades a week to consider their position, the conference being adjourned until the 9th March, previous to which the representatives of the societies concerned held a meeting, when the following resolution was agreed to:—

“ That this meeting declines, at so short a notice, to agree to terms which we have had no previous opportunity of considering. Meantime, we place on record our surprise that unions which have no quarrel with the employers on overtime or working conditions should, without provocation, have an ultimatum in regard to these important questions thrust upon them.”

The terms of this resolution were conveyed to the employers with a request to postpone consideration of the matters raised till the need for such consideration might arise. This request was refused.

Direct negotiations with the A.E.U. were then opened up and joint representations were made to the employers for a postponement of the lock-out notice in order to allow of discussion whilst the whole of the workmen were employed. On this point, however, the employers were obdurate. The

only concession they made was to exempt the allied trades from the lock-out until they took a ballot vote of their members, which they stipulated should be in their hands on March 25th. This vote was taken within the time limit fixed by the employers, with the following result :—

For acceptance	49,503
Against acceptance	164,759
	<hr/>
Majority against acceptance	115,256

Our own vote was :—

For	1,642
Against	4,984
	<hr/>
Majority against	3,342

This vote was conclusive enough, but it was regarded by the representatives of the allied trades more as an expression of opinion than as a final mandate, and between the 11th and 25th March a series of conciliatory efforts to avert a general lock-out were made, which have never been paralleled in the Trade Union movement. Everyone lent a hand, including the Prime Minister, the Minister of Labour, and especially the National Joint Council, a small body representing the General Council of the Trades Union Congress, the Labour Party, and the Parliamentary Labour Party. However, the employers proved adamant, and, although they agreed to alter the wording of their memorandum with a view to sugar-coating the pill, they would not budge from its intention that complete managerial functions should be vested with the employers, and that the only part the workmen should play in the future management of the works in which they were employed was to be given an explanation of any change from the daily routine which was imposed by the firm.

The negotiations had the one important result of postponing the threat of the employers to lock out the allied trades as soon as the result of their ballot vote had been made known, and ultimately as the result of the incessant efforts of the National Joint Council the following memorandum was agreed to by that body and the employers' representatives

and presented to the joint trades as a basis for further negotiations :—

“ MEMORANDUM OF INTERVIEW BETWEEN SIR ALLAN SMITH AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NATIONAL JOINT COUNCIL HELD AT MONTAGU HOUSE, LONDON, APRIL 1ST, 1922, 10 P.M.

“ With a view to securing an immediate resumption of negotiations between the parties, it is jointly agreed to recommend as follows :—

“ “This conference of the representatives of the unions declares its willingness to resume negotiations with the employers on the basis of conference of March 24th, 1922, and accepts the principles laid down in clause 1 thereof which imply the right of the management pending negotiations to give instructions, except where modified by agreement which may be entered into as a result of the negotiations which follow hereon.”

“ The employers and the Negotiating Committee of the unions will endeavour to adjust mutually their ideas as to the manner in which the principle of management and the functions of Trade Unions will be applied to the actual circumstances of the cases to be discussed.

**“ ALLAN M. SMITH,
ARTHUR HENDERSON
(Secretary, National Joint Council).**

“ Should the conference of the representatives of the Trade Unions accept the foregoing I shall submit to the employers the position referred to in paragraph 4 of my letter to Mr. Arthur Henderson of 25th March, 1922, with a view to reconsideration, and shall arrange for a further conference between the employers and the Negotiating Committee of the Trade Unions on Monday, 3rd April, 1922, at 3-30 p.m.

“ 1st April, 1922.”

“ ALLAN M. SMITH.

The A.E.U. very rightly considered that there was no difference in the position which had been repudiated by the vote of their members and refused to enter into further negotiations with the employers on the basis laid down in their various memoranda. The other 51 trades, however,

agreed to enter into negotiations in the hope of avoiding a lock-out, and from the classic precincts of the Prime Minister's official residence presented the following memorandum to the employers:—

“That the representatives of the Federation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades, the National Union of Foundry Workers, and the National Federation of General Workers have accepted the memorandum of April 1st attached thereto, and are prepared to enter into negotiations thereon with the Engineering and National Employers' Federation.

“In accepting the memorandum referred to the unions specified in Schedule B attached hereto are acting as one body, and the Negotiating Committee which will represent them will have the mandate of all the unions concerned to conduct the negotiations up to the point of arriving, if possible, at a joint recommendation, which, in turn, will be submitted for acceptance to the ballot of the members of the unions referred to, should such a procedure be in accordance with their constitution.

“That the representatives of the aforesaid groups and unions, in view of the proposals now made, request the employers' representatives to postpone the lock-out notices which take effect on Thursday, April 6th.

“Attached hereto is Schedule A (the memorandum of April 1st referred to) and also Schedule B (a list of the groups and individual unions on whose behalf this proposal is made).

“J. N. BELL, National Federation of General Workers.

HARRY PORTER, N.U.F.W.

JAMES ROWAN, F.E. & S.T.

FRANK SMITH, Secretary, Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades Federation.

JOHN RYAN, Amalgamated Moulders' Union.

ARTHUR SCOTT, Operative Spindle and Flyer.

“10, Downing Street, S.W.

“April 4th, 1922, 9-30 p.m.”

The rejoinder of the employers read as follows :—

“Prepared to accept the proposals submitted on behalf of the groups of Trade Unions and individual Trade Unions dated 4th April, 1922, and will for the purpose of discussion devote the whole of the week, commencing Monday, 10th April, 1922, and thereafter give fourteen days for the purpose of ballot, if necessary, on a joint recommendation, should that be arrived at. Meantime and during the negotiation period and the period for ballot, the notices posted will be suspended.

“April 5th, 1922, 12-15 noon.”

Our own E.C. then indulged in a “full and prolonged discussion” on the situation and delivered themselves of the following resolution :—

“That we view the division in Trade Union ranks on managerial functions with the gravest apprehension, and we deeply deplore the fact that three of the four bodies concerned have accepted a basis for discussion with the employers, which seems to indicate thereby a playing with words when compared with the employers’ original demands.”

It was further resolved :—

“That Secretary press for a full conference of Executive representatives before submitting terms of settlement to a ballot vote of members.”

This is about as cheap an expression of a combative Trade Union spirit as has been evolved during the conduct of the recent negotiations. If our E.C. honestly sympathise with the position taken up by the A.E.U. why do they not accept the vote of our own members as mandatory and range themselves along with the combatants. They have no mandate from the members to allow our policy to be determined and controlled by the three bodies representing the allied trades, and they have no justification for regarding the vote of our members as being a pious expression of opinion. It is not urged for one moment that we should separate ourselves from the trades with whom we have been identified during the past three months. After all, the chief question in dispute—the manning of machines—does not, nor ever

will, affect our trade, but we have every right to object to an obscurely worded resolution which indicates a sympathy with a cause which we could support if any value attaches to a vote of our own members, but from which we stand aloof from motives of expediency. The least we could have done was to refrain from expressing any opinion, which can only indicate that, whilst we are all in favour of hunting with the hounds we find it most convenient at the moment to run with the hare.

At this point we must leave this interesting controversy. The A.E.U. have been on the streets for over four weeks and the allied trades are now in conclave with the employers over the wording of the proposed agreement on managerial functions, and whilst the shops are empty of skilled mechanics the semi-skilled workmen are employed on their old jobs and will undoubtedly be not only consolidating their position in the shops, but extending their spheres of labour as occasion demands and opportunity offers. We have already overstepped our boundaries, and the ultimate result of the present deplorable situation cannot be chronicled in these pages.

We were involved, but in a much lesser extent, in a wages dispute between the Shipbuilding Employers' Federation and the shipbuilding trades. There is no doubt but what the shipbuilding industry was in a bad way during 1921, and it was stated at a conference on January 19th, 1922: "That only 28 per cent. of the shipbuilding berths were full. That 16 per cent. were only partially filled. That 56 per cent. of the berths were empty." It was also stated that 1921 was the worst year since 1907, and a demand was made for a reduction of 26s. 6d. per week, this being the amount of the cost-of-living bonus granted from time to time.

It would be as tedious as it is unnecessary to recapitulate the negotiations and conferences which were instituted as a result of the employers' demand, the result of which was the postponement of the date of reduction from the 15th to the 29th March, on which date the first cut of 10s. 6d. per week was to be made, a further reduction of 6s. to be made on and from April 26th, the remaining 10s. to be made the subject of future negotiation. The trades found it impossible to complete their ballot vote before April 4th and instructed

their members not to submit to any reduction exacted before that date. The employers, however, proved obdurate and the workmen ceased work on March 29th. The result of their ballot confirmed the attitude of their representatives, 26,451 voting for acceptance and 87,026 against, a majority of 60,575 against the employers' demand. Our members employed in ship-repairing centres were given an opportunity of voting, when 122 voted for and 244 against acceptance. As a consequence we have forty-seven members on strike in Liverpool and Southampton, why it is somewhat difficult to understand, as it has always been the custom that our members engaged in ship-repairing were to be governed by the conditions which applied to the engineering trade in the district, and that is being done on the North-East Coast, the Clyde, and other ship-repairing centres. The strike is now in full blast, and as the Government have refused an inquiry under Part II. of the Industrial Courts Act in respect of the shipbuilding strike and the engineering lock-out, it appears that both disputes will go on until the exhaustion of either side calls a halt and makes a settlement imperative.

It is interesting to note that the E.C. have intimated to the branches that in the event of our trade being involved in the engineers' lock-out that neither Contingent nor Assistance Benefit will be paid to those in receipt of the maximum scale of trade donation, but members on short scales will have their benefit made up to 10s. per week. In view of the imperative character of the rule this is a remarkable decision, and is the first occasion upon which the rules have been abrogated, but needs must—and there appears to be every justification for this decision in view of the present economic position of our society.

NOTE.—The fact that we have already overstepped a narrative which should have terminated on our fiftieth anniversary is an excuse, if not a justification, for adding a few words which will have considerable value in the future, when our official reports are not easily available.

The lock-out of the engineering industry is now terminated. The federated trades decided on a pooled vote by 99,313 to 46,881 votes to accept the employers' terms and work was resumed on Tuesday, June 6th. The Boilermakers refused to accept the pooled vote, and it is said declined the

employers' terms by a majority of 18,238 on a total vote of 26,628, whilst the Foundry Workers also decided against common action; their vote being 8,618 against and 7,610 for acceptance; they are taking another vote and will probably resume work at once. The Amalgamated Engineering Union have now taken their ballot vote upon the terms agreed to by the federated trades, plus certain additions concerning overtime, which affect their organisation only, and by 75,478 to 39,423 votes have decided to bow to the inevitable, and their lock-out formally terminated on Tuesday, 13th June, having lasted from March 11th, and for the first time in their history they have been compelled during the last fortnight of their struggle to limit the payments of benefit to Sick, Superannuation, and Funeral.

Our vote was : For acceptance, 3,038 ; against, 2,619.

In spite of the strenuous times we have been experiencing, we have been compelled to find time to deal with the question of payment by result in the only district in which we have an agreement with the employers, viz., Lancashire. It appears that a number of employers have come to the conclusion that our contention that the system is not applicable to our trade is fully justified, and they had discontinued bonus payments to our members. Strange to say, those affected by the change did not relish the endorsement of the employers to a policy which has been established by a vote of the members, including those in the affected area, and disputes were frequent. The whole matter was thrashed out at a conference held in Manchester on January 20th between our society and the Employers' Association, when the following alteration in our agreement was made :—

“It is hereby mutually agreed to recommend that clause 4 of the agreement, made as the result of conference held 7th October, 1919, be cancelled and the following substituted therefor :—

““It is understood that when a firm, after having introduced a scheme under the agreement and finding the system adopted unsatisfactory, they shall be at liberty to alter the same, and for this purpose shall discuss the matter with the men concerned, and, failing a satisfactory method being agreed upon, the men shall

work at day work rates after one month's notice from either side, such notice to be posted in the department concerned subsequent to there being failure to agree.' "

The above is extracted from the "A.E.U. Monthly Journal" for February, page 28, no reference having been made in our own report to the important alteration in our agreement, although casual references have been made to disputes against the withdrawal of the bonus and threats foreshadowed as to what would happen when the boot was on the other leg. However, there is no dubiety as to our position in regard to payment by result in Lancashire, the employers have full liberty to revert to time rates if they wish to do so. It would be extremely interesting to have a list of the firms who have discontinued their bonus payments under the new agreement.

We are also indebted to the March report of the A.E.U. (page 38), which gives particulars of a somewhat similar movement in Ipswich, where our trade received notice that from the first full pay in March their bonus of 25 per cent. would be withdrawn. Conferences were held between our local branch and the A.E.U. as representing our trade and the employers, but the latter reiterated their determination to do away with the bonus and restore day work, and thereafter reserve the right, if they chose, to introduce individual systems of payment by result, and this presumably is the position in Ipswich at the time of writing.

A rather curious position was revealed on the North-East Coast when in consequence of the hopeless condition of our trade the local District Committee considered it advisable that efforts should be made to divert some of our members into another occupation and made overtures to the Amalgamated Woodworking Trades for the recognition of our cards if and when we obtained employment at joinering. Readers of these pages cannot have failed to note that from the institution of our society we have been engaged on a ceaseless warfare upon joiners who sought to enter our trade. However, adversity makes strange bedfellows, and there appears no reason why our members should not follow any trade at which they were capable of working, provided there was a demand for workmen which could not be met by the bonâ-fide members of the craft, and provided that the new comers were

not used to cut down wages or working conditions. The local officials of the Woodworkers did not seem averse to the innovation, but referred the matter to headquarters, whose reply was direct and unequivocal, that they would allow of no facilities being granted to a trade which pandered to a system of payment by result. Truly, the whirligig of time works great changes. The pity of it is that we were driven to such straits as to ask, and perhaps the greater pity is that we did ask.

So we ring down the curtain on our Jubilee in the midst of a welter of discord, suspicion, and uncertainty unparalleled in the history of the engineering trade. We have a cleavage between the paramount societies in that industry and the remainder, the detrimental effects of which will be felt for a generation. The trend of events seem to point to a clear cut and irreconcilable division between the skilled and semi or unskilled sections of the engineering trade, and the effects of this fratricidal strife cannot but prove detrimental to the interests of both. Which side we will take in the controversy cannot be foreseen at the moment. Our position will probably be determined by circumstances outside our control as an organisation, but at the time of writing events seem to be shaping themselves which will have a profound and permanent influence on the future of the Trade Union movement in one of its most important industries. Whatever the reason, that industry is now fighting for its life. We may talk as we will of the bogey of foreign competition, but we have the report of our own representatives of huge and rapidly developing ship-repairing, shipbuilding, and engineering establishments being established only a few hours' steaming from our shores, and we know that a considerable portion of the work of which we formerly had the monopoly is now being diverted to these Continental ports. The doctrine that is being so sedulously preached nowadays, that the economic policy of the workmen must be to do as little as he can for as much as can get is the road to ruin. We cannot live by taking in each others washing; we are an industrial community living on our efforts, and our only hope of re-establishing our industrial and commercial supremacy is by team work, the artisan in the workshop giving of his best under the most favourable conditions which the industry can afford and the employer in the

counting-house and in the market disposing of his wares to the best advantage. State ownership will never solve our industrial difficulties, and a Labour Government would be no more successful in ameliorating industrial conditions in this country than they have been elsewhere. Reforms and remedies must come from the inside and must have their foundation in work. Above and beyond all, we must cling to the principles of industrial combination, which find their expression in the Trade Union movement; in their highest development they embody the profession and practice of mutual assistance and support of every condition incident to industrial humanity, and of all the nostrums which have been advocated from time to time as a cure for our industrial disabilities and ailments the principles of Trade Union combination have alone stood the test of time and circumstance, and have proved their willingness and capacity to protect the interests of those who subscribe to its tenets. Were it permissible to Bowdlerize Shakespeare we would conclude by italicising the first four words of the exhortation of Polonius to Laertes:—

“To thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou can’st not then be false to any man.”

CONCLUSION.

What does a review of our principles, our hopes, and our achievements during half-a-century reveal? Naturally enough different things to different people, and in all cases retrospect is coloured by the views, the likes, dislikes, and prejudices, of the individual. It is thus exceedingly difficult to give a plain, unvarnished, and unbiased summary of events and changes which have extended over so long a period as that under review. Fifty years ago our trade was disorganised, little known, and as a concrete body exercised little or no influence over its own industrial conditions. Forced by the pressure of circumstances to do something to raise itself out of the rut, it was decided by a handful of patternmakers to establish a Trade Union confined to members of that trade. It was believed at that time that the interests of the trade could be better served by a separate organisation than by association with a body in which they would be an insignificant and permanent minority. It was also believed that we could run a society much more cheaply than if it were in a mixed society. In other words, our trade was better employed and healthier than were other sections of the engineering industry, whilst we had no old age commitments and twenty years was too far off to be considered as a factor in our internal economy, so we laid the rules of our contemporaries under somewhat heavy contribution, and we lessened the contribution and increased the benefits to suit our own particular estimated requirements.

We also cheapened the administration expenditure, paying our officers a merely nominal salary and depending largely upon voluntary effort for our minor administrative work and wholly upon unpaid service for propaganda and organising, and in our constitution we limited our objects to the furtherance of our own interests as a trade and the payment of such benefits as in our own judgment we considered best suited to our particular requirements. We have not departed from these objects during the last 50 years, although we have broadened them to an almost inconceivable extent, whilst we have departed from the narrow and it may be penurious system of administration to as great an extent as in respect of our objects. Conditions have changed during the lifetime of our association, and the ideals of 50 years ago have become

the realities of to-day, and the most ardent and progressive of our members must acknowledge that in our constitution we have kept fully abreast with the times. Instead of limiting our expenditure to the furtherance of our own interests and the payment of our own benefits, we have assumed the responsibility of being purse-bearers to the whole industrial community. Amongst our objects is to give service, grants, investments, or loans to our own and other trades, to co-operative societies, etc., whose objects or activities include the furtherance of the statutory objects of a Trade Union, giving grants or endowments to colleges catering for Trade Unionists, and to enable the society to take a full part in the political and industrial work of the Trade Union, etc., which objects take precedence of the original objects as contained in our book of rules. All this potential expenditure is under the absolute control of the E.C., and as the income for these objects—which includes the “strengthening of the hand of fellowship,” whatever that may mean—is derived from an appropriation from the ordinary contributions of the members, it appears as if we had voluntarily handed over the control of our funds to our E.C., who if they see fit can devote them to almost any object with which a majority are in sympathy.

The changes in our administration are equally drastic, as has already been emphasised. In our early days we depended on the unpaid activities of our members for our organising work, and right nobly was it done in the face of difficulties and risks which are unknown at the present time, and we are still dependent upon these voluntary efforts for this work, and always will be so. We have paid Organisers, it is true, but whatever they organise they do not teach the novitiate “to look forward to the time when they may become members of such a society,” for the simple reason that they have not the opportunities of doing this essential work. The nature of our trade compels the man at the bench to be our Organiser, and he seeks no fee nor material reward for performing this essential duty. Anyhow, the members have, through their representatives, decided that we shall rise to the dignity of having paid Organisers in any district where a majority are willing to contribute one-half their salary, and it is to be hoped that those who have made the venture are satisfied that their money is well invested. We have also

made a new departure in creating a National Executive. This has usually been considered the monopoly of a very few large societies. We are trying to prove it is a necessity of an organisation small in number but opulent in funds. For the greater part of our existence our E.C. cost something less than £20 per annum. Now we spend between £500 and £600 for the same service. We cannot measure the value of a central administrative body in terms of £ s. d., and if the members at large are of opinion that they are getting value for their money nothing more need be said. Further, the whole of our cost of management has gone up in a similarly lavish scale, and many of our old-timers who remember when our Central Office equipment consisted of one paid official, a kitchen table, and half-a-dozen wooden chairs, and that when we had over 7,000 members and some £40,000, will fail to recognise the administrative machine which is now responsible for our destinies.

At one time it was a rough formula that a Trade Union should have one paid official to 2,000 members. We have nearly doubled that proportion and can derive what satisfaction we may from the knowledge that our administration costs us more per member than probably any other society representing skilled workmen. In the very unlikely event of our members deciding that the present circumstances require an application of the "Geddes axe" it is only possible to restrict expenditure by administrative economies. We cannot interfere with benefits, but there is not the slightest indication that any economies in this direction are contemplated—in fact, the reverse is the case, although it is significant that the A.E.U. are enjoining their District Committees to restrict their expenditure, and full credit must be given to our own Appeal Court, who have formally objected to meeting when there is no business to do.

We have not only multiplied our objects and administrative machinery out of all recognition, but we broadened our outlook to a similar extent. At one time politics were barred, and our expressed views were quite voluntarily limited to minding our own particular business. We have changed all that, and our range of thought covers the whole industrial and economic horizon. We ardently cultivate that will-o'-the-wisp class-consciousness, and conveniently saddle the present

capitalistic system with all the industrial woes with which we are beset. Our reports are filled with denunciations of employers generally and our own in particular, and if the sentiments dished up to us every month are a true reflex of the sentiments of the general body of our membership, we are indeed a most disgruntled and unhappy community. Declining—and wisely—at the eleventh hour to come out on strike to obtain an advance of wages for ourselves, we have, by vote, declared our willingness to drop tools when ordered to by a composite authority, who profess belief in direct action with regard to purely political questions, and at all times and under every circumstance our members are enjoined to use the ballot box in the cause of Labour upon all elective bodies.

Is all this threatening, warning, and exhortation worth the cost of paper and printing? Do the rank and file really want so much shepherding to do what should be a very obvious duty? The abuse of the capitalist may be quite justified, but our criticisms should be tempered by the knowledge that if we were in his shoes we would probably be much worse than he, and the possession of capital would very much modify our views on the evils of the capitalistic system. We feed ourselves with half-digested and imperfectly understood economic theories, which have not the merit of originality and are redolent of the paste pot and scissors. We delude ourselves with fallacies so persistently that our mental horizon is so limited that we can conceive and see no other interest than our own.

We are suffering from a condition of trade unparalleled in industrial history, which we attribute to our enormous production the year following the war, and counsel lesser individual production as a remedy. Both the cause and the remedy are manifestly wrong, as we will see if we take the trouble to face the problem from all sides. We are a manufacturing country and live by selling our manufactures to anyone who will buy from us. If our charges are too high, our customers will go elsewhere or do without. At the present time our customers have neither the money to buy from us nor the commodities to exchange for our staple products, and some of them are so poor that if we gave them for nothing what we live by selling they could not pay for the freightage. How, then, will the doctrine of "ca' canny" stimulate the demand

for our products. When a workman deliberately slackens off he does it firstly to benefit himself by lengthening his job, and secondly to give his idle fellow workman the chance of a job, and he may also have the idea of curtailing his employer's profits. He may succeed in spinning out his own term of employment, as also of taking his fellow off the streets, but in both cases he increases the cost of production, which his employer passes on to his customer, with the result that orders are either withheld or placed elsewhere, and both workmen find themselves on the streets. What we are suffering from is not over-production but under-consumption, and it is as foolish to think we can improve trade by increasing manufacturing costs as it is to think that the rate of wages in a competitive industry can be regulated on a purely cost of living basis.

What does all the spume and splutter which is incessantly directed against the present system of industry mean? We may be as class-conscious as we please, but does it help to be continually preaching class hatred. We cry out for the abolition of the present capitalist system and call upon our members to put a Labour majority in Parliament in order to substitute something which would be of greater benefit to the workers, but how is it to be done? By purchase or confiscation? The first is a financial impossibility, and we have the ghastly tragedy of Russia as an example of forcible and blood-stained communistic enterprise, and in that unhappy country, where sympathetic observers from this country have acknowledged that the individual output per man is only 10 per cent. of what it was under the old regime, and that in spite of a condition of industrial conscription which would be intolerable in a free country, we find that the Government has admitted complete failure, and is now inviting capitalists to reoccupy their old factories and reorganise the industries of that country on its former basis.

The Labour Party has gone no further than to advocate a tax on capital. How that would help our industries it is difficult to see, because the withdrawal of capital from industry would cripple us to a greater extent than any liquidation of our national obligations by such diversion of capital would benefit us. What we want is to exploit such markets as are in a position to buy from us. To do so we must keep down

the cost of production to the lowest possible limit, and we can only do so by team work. The interests of employer and workmen are indissolubly bound together, and instead of continually railing against our captains of industry as being narrow-souled, sordid exploiters, we should recognise our community of interests and do our best to rescue our industries from the slough of despond into which they have fallen. Only by doing so will we be able to take advantage of our opportunities to maintain and improve our conditions of employment.

What about our society as an instrument for improving our workshop conditions? After all, this is the acid test of our success or failure, the chief object and justification of our existence as a Trade Union organisation. We have succeeded in building up a society which we can claim is in a position to regulate and legislate on behalf of our trade as a whole. We are untrammelled by any agreement or restriction which limits our action. We not only possess the right to strike without consultation or interference by any authority outside our own organisation, but we can, if we see fit, call a lightning strike if we are of opinion that our interests would be furthered thereby. But what have we done with this potent weapon? Possessing a giant's strength, it says much for our commonsense that we have never attempted to wield it like a giant. In all our fifty years' existence we have never had one national strike, and during that period we have only twice had a local district strike—on the North-East Coast and Clyde—and in neither case was the result of such a character as to encourage a further resort to this weapon. Our efforts to improve our conditions have been incessant, and the essential point for us to consider in our retrospect is whether we have been more successful as a separate body than would have been the case had we associated in our conciliatory efforts with contemporary trades? The answer is a disappointing one, and our tale of successful movements in which we alone were concerned, and which did not apply to other trades, is exceedingly meagre. We have throughout at times associated ourselves with joint movements, and again we have anticipated or followed such movements, but the result has invariably been the same, and it would be easy to count upon the fingers of both hands the improvements

we have effected in our general conditions of employment in any district which were carried through by our organisation alone and which did not affect the general body of workmen. We have had, of course, innumerable shop adjustments—allowances for grinding time and other similar minor improvements, which probably could have been as easily obtained through a mixed organisation provided the members of our trade rendered themselves vocal enough. The present tendency is for joint movements. Even the Moulders, the most exclusive and hidebound of all organisations, have realised this and have bowed to the inevitable, and all general negotiations with regard to wages and hours are now carried through, or at least attempted, by a joint representative body, upon which the A.E.U. are quite naturally the predominant factor. If circumstances have thus forced us to compulsory association with our contemporaries in all essential matters concerning our working conditions would be able to dissociate ourselves from such a body and take independent action in the case of a strike being declared which we did not consider touched us so closely as to justify participation? Have we the power or the desire to stand clear? We have only once been submitted to this supreme test and that was years ago, when by the narrowest of majorities we stood aloof from a movement which vitally interested us but in regard to the initiation and conduct of which we had never been consulted. We, along with others, have travelled a long road since then, and to the writer at all events it is perfectly certain that if a general strike took place in the engineering trade, no matter on what issue and how conducted, that our members would become active participants whatever our central authority advised or decided, or what part our society played in the dispute, being perfectly assured that eventually they would be accorded the fullest financial support our rules and money bags allowed.

If this opinion is justified it would appear that as a separate organisation we can neither conduct a successful and isolated movement on behalf of our trade nor can we control our members from participating in a general strike in the engineering trade if we wished to abstain. What use, then, is our organisation; and on our fiftieth anniversary are we to confess failure? Most certainly and emphatically not. We

have organised our trade as no other authority could have done so. We have made the fullest possible use of that organisation to improve our conditions up to that point where we could function usefully as a separate entity. Beyond that point which occurred with the Federation of Local Engineering Employers' Associations after the engineers' eight-hour lock-out, we found our activities hampered. Our difficulties since then have increased until we have reached the point that, whether we like it or not, if we are honest to ourselves, we are compelled to acknowledge that our industrial destinies as a separate craft and organisation are practically governed and controlled from 110, Peckham Road.

This is the day of big battalions; sectional movements, even if pushed to the extreme, do not stand the remotest chance of success, and the small huckstering trader has just as much hope of successfully competing with the big multiple establishments as has a sectional society connected with the engineering and shipbuilding industry of putting itself against the mighty forces of the Employers' Federation which governs that industry. This perhaps is not the place to discuss the question of amalgamation. Our members have had every opportunity to decide, and they have deliberately cast their votes in the negative by a large majority. Our society being the only organisation connected with the engineering trade of national importance and standing who declined fusion, there is no reason to believe that the majority view has changed upon this vital question—as a matter of opinion the reverse is probably the case, as we have since the vote was taken created a bureaucracy who may be expected to fight desperately against any change in the present conditions. Circumstances in the industrial world may at any time thrust this question into the limelight, and our members may again be afforded the opportunity of choosing between the shadow of pretending to legislate on behalf of the special claims of our trade and the substance of being actively and intimately associated with the organisation which disposes of all workshop questions relating to the industry of which we are an important, although comparatively small, numerical section.

When I was asked by the E.C. to undertake the rôle of historian and commentator of our Jubilee history, I accepted

the commission with considerable misgivings. I felt that such a work would be more of an autobiography than a history, and this has proved to be the case, in spite of all my efforts to keep in the background. But a man who has held the chief administrative position in the society for thirty-three years, during which time it was fighting for recognition and standing in the Trade Union movement, is bound to leave his impress upon its traditions, constitution, and policy. It may be said that invidious comparisons have been made between the present and the past regime: that was inevitable when such drastic changes as we have witnessed during the last few years have taken place. But the implied comparisons have been made in a historical and not in a reformatory sense, as no one knows better than myself that the dull, deadly apathy of the great bulk of the members is proof against any attempt to alter or amend any constitution or administrative usage which does not immediately concern the interests of the rank and file of our membership.

My criticisms have not been directed against any individual, nor have they been fostered by any feeling of personal jealousy or resentment, but with a sincere desire to incorporate in our history a comparative dissertation upon certain constitutional and administrative changes which in the opinion of the writer do not add to the efficiency and well-being of our society. They are the opinions of one individual only, who does not desire that they should possess any more weight than would attach to the expressed views of any member of our organisation who has had the knowledge and inclination to deliver himself of his honest and unbiased opinions.

I lay down my pen with considerable regret. This work has occupied most of my spare time for some eighteen months, and many times during its compilation I have fallen into a reverie and visualised the incidents I have been endeavouring to express—the conference-room, the local representatives, our statement of claim, the employers' rejoinder, the ensuing arguments—thrust and parry—the adjournments, the final result, then to the branch or district meeting with the report of the conference, further questions, answers, and, at times, criticisms, with may be a vote, often followed by an adjournment to a convenient hostelry and a friendly glass with a few

old friends; then to bed, to lie awake most of the night thinking of the brilliant repartee one should have made.

All these things and many others not so agreeable come back upon one, and for a few brief moments he lives in the past and again communes with those whom he will probably never see again, but who we will remember as long as memory lasts. It was my intention to enshrine in these pages some of the names of these brave souls who did sterling work in connection with our earlier struggles and laid the foundations which made it possible to build up the organisation as we now have it. On reflection I decided to abandon that idea. During my journeyings I have met members of our society who, unknown and unappreciated, right away from the limelight, were working hard in our interests and making sacrifices of time, money, and position equal to any made by our pioneers. There may be, and are "other mute, inglorious Miltons doing good by stealth and blushing to have it known" who I have not met, and whose names would be omitted from such an honourable roll. As it is impossible to make a complete record of those members who are chiefly responsible for our institution, it is as well if we leave all such under the cloak of anonymity, with the knowledge that their names will be remembered, if only as a tradition, in the districts where they worked and at times suffered in the interests of our organisation.

I feel that this is probably the last work I will ever do on behalf of the society, whose history is so intimately interwoven with my own, and I fully recognise that my reputation will rest on the work I have done in connection with the General Secretaryship of the United Patternmakers' Association. As I conclude my labours, I am obsessed by the somewhat whimsical question that whilst the publication and issue of our Jubilee history is assured, will its Centenary complement ever see the light of day, and if so, who will write it? If we survive in our present form for a further fifty-year period it is probable that my successor is not yet born and, whether or no, I transmit to him my sincere and posthumous sympathy in his work of faithfully rendering the centennial history of our organisation.

ROLL OF HONOUR.

List of Members who lost their lives during the Great War, 1914-1918.

Name.	Branch.	Rank.	Regiment.	When and Where Killed.
Purdy, Robert.....	Sunderland	Private	Durham Lt. Inf....	France, July 2, 1916
Johnstone, E. L.....	"	"	"	" April 2, 1916
Whinham, Wm.....	Newcastle	Sergeant	"	" April 19, 1916
Barker, I. C.....	"	"	"	"
Kelly, H.	"	Sapper	Royal Engineers...	" July 6, 1917
Pattison, J.	"	Private	N'umberland Fus.	" June 16, 1917
Bell, H. S.....	"	L. Sergeant.	Yorks Lt. Inf.....	" July 18, 1918
Bain, W. H.....	Stockton	"	N'umberland Fus.	" Jan. 10, 1916
Norbury, Chas. G.	South Shields ..	"	"	" Nov. 11, 1918
Illingworth, A.....	Bradford	"	"	"
Harvey, A. E.....	"	"	"	"
Humphries, E.....	Gateshead.....	"	"	" May 6, 1915
Lawson, —	"	Sapper	Royal Engineers...	" August 7, 1917
Palmer, Reg.	Smethwick	"	"	" July 4, 1916
Mitchell, S.....	"	Sergeant ...	Royal Air Force ...	" April 3, 1918
Adams, J.....	Sheffield	L. Sergeant.	Yorkshire	" June 7, 1917
Carr, H.....	Birmingham.....	Private	Royal Warwick ...	" Sept. 3, 1916
Gaffney, E.....	"	Corporal ...	"	" August 24, 1916
Mackae, Roderick	Dundee	Private	Royal Scots.....	" July 12, 1916
Speed, D.....	"	2nd Lieut....	A. & S. Highl'nd'rs	" May 2, 1917
Sheriff, G. R.....	"	"	"	" October 2, 1916
Fell, D.....	"	"	"	" October 4, 1918
Peebles, J.	WallSEND	"	"	" Feb. 5, 1916
Moodie, C. B.....	"	Sapper	Royal Engineers...	" Nov. 4, 1918
Ness, W.....	"	Corporal ...	R.F.A.	" April 23, 1917
Bleasdale, J.....	Manchester	Private	Border Regiment..	Dardanelles, Aug. 31, 1915
Chester, Stephen.	"	"	"	" March 2, 1916
Raynor, George...	"	Private	London Regiment.	France, June 18, 1916
Moss, Joseph.....	"	"	"	Dardanelles, Aug. 7, 1915
Howarth, T.....	"	"	"	" July —, 1917
Farmer, I.....	Derby.....	"	"	" Nov. 18, 1918
Gaskin, R. B.....	"	2nd Lieut....	Royal Fusiliers....	France, Sept. 8, 1917
Chew, W.....	Blackburn	Private	Lancs. Fusiliers...	" July 13, 1916
Latchford, N.....	Swansea	"	"	" April 2, 1918
Stephenson, H. ...	Liverpool	"	"	"
Nevols, J.....	"	Sergeant ...	"	"
Sollett, F.....	Erith.....	Sergeant ...	R.F.A.	" Sept. 28, 1917
Hawkins, W. E....	London No. 1 ...	"	"	"
Craig, John	Glasgow	Corporal ...	7th Scottish Rifles	Dardanelles, June 26, 1915
McLean, William	"	Private	10th Batt. Gordons	France, Sept. 20, 1915
Walker, William .	"	"	"	" June, 1915
McNeil, —	"	Private	Royal Highlanders	Mesopotamia, July 22, 1917
Wilson, G.	"	"	H.L.I.	France, Nov., 1916
Rodger, T. A.....	"	Captain	Royal Engineers...	" July, 1917
Malcolm, T.	"	2nd Lieut....	Cameron Highl'ds	Mesopotamia, Oct., 1917
Dickson, A.....	"	Private	H.L.I.	France, Oct., 1918
Adams, E.....	Belfast	"	Royal Irish Rifles	" May 6, 1916
Diamond, M.....	Dumbarton	Sapper	Royal Engineers...	" Oct. 23, 1915
Butler, E. J.	Darlington	Gunner	R.G.A.	" Mar. 18, 1918
Peters, D.....	Coatbridge	Private	H.L.I.	" July 2, 1916
Taylor, Harry.....	"	"	Scottish Rifles....	" July 20, 1916
Davie, James	"	"	Scots Guards	" Sept. 15, 1916
Dobbie, T.	"	"	Lanarkshire Ymy.	Egypt, Jan. 20, 1917
Paton, James	Greenock	"	Seaforth H'l'nders	Persian Gulf, Feb. 12, 1916
Hastings, T.	"	"	"	"
Milton, A.	Govan.....	Private	Royal Scots	France, Dec. 19, 1915
Rodgers, J.....	"	"	Scottish Rifles ...	" Aug. 29, 1916
Paton, Robert.....	"	"	"	"
McKinnon, A.....	"	Private	Lanarkshire Ymy.	Salonica, Dec. 5, 1916
Osborne, W.	"	"	"	"
Scott, J. H.....	"	"	"	"

Roll of Honour (continued).

Name.	Branch.	Rank.	Regiment.	When and Where Killed.
Gibb, Andrew ...	Paisley	—	—	France, May 30, 1915
Black, James	Kilmarnock	—	—	" Dec. 25, 1918
Hargreaves, E.	Halifax	Driver	West Riding F.A..	Flanders, Aug. 20, 1915
Binns, N.	"	L. Corporal.	Duke of Wellington Infantry.	" Nov. 30, 1915
Nicholson, Robert	Edinbro' & Leith	Drummer ...	7th Royal Scots ...	Gretna Railway Disaster, May 22, 1915
Innis, J. Mitchell.	"	Private	R.A.M.C.	Nov. 29, 1915
Gourlay, C. C.	"	—	—	Oct. 20, 1918
Pegg, J.	Nottingham	Sergeant ...	Notts and Derby ..	France, April 20, 1917
Selby, E.	"	Sapper	Royal Engineers..	" Sept. 4, 1917
Beecroft, P. W.	"	Corporal ...	R.F.A.	" Sept. 25, 1918
McWilliam, R.	Aberdeen	Private	Gordon Highl'd'rs	" July 23, 1916
Ambler, G.	Jarrow	—	—	" Sept. 1, 1916
Wilson, William..	Partick	Private	H.L.I.	" July 1, 1916
Rae, R.	"	Sergeant ...	"	" July 1, 1916
Stobie, J.	"	L. Corporal.	"	" July 1, 1916
Oudney, F.	"	Private	Royal Scots Fus...	" July 30, 1916
McVicar, R.	"	—	R.F.A.	Egypt, Nov. 2, 1917
McIntosh, A.	"	—	A. & S. Highl'nd'rs	" Aug. 18, 1918
Shiel, R.	"	—	Scots Guards	" May 18, 1915
Ashley, E.	Lincoln	Sapper	R.E.	France, July 13, 1916
Scrivenner, M.	"	Private	Derbyshire Regt..	" July 15, 1916
Willoughby, F.	Leicester	—	"Nelson" Batt..	" April 24, 1917
Jeynes, H.	"	2nd Lieut...	Lincolnshire Regt.	" Mar. 22, 1918
Cooper, Alex.	Glasgow North ..	—	Royal Scots Fus...	" Mar. 10, 1915
Taylor, A. R.	"	Sergeant ...	H.L.I.	" Sept. 25, 1915
Delvin, J.	"	Private	"	" July 1, 1916
Bank, J.	"	Sapper	R.E.	—
Rintoul, G.	"	Driver	R.F.A.	France, July 5, 1917
Henry, W.	Motherwell	Gunner	R.G.A.	—
Birks, A.	Huddersfield ...	Private	Duke of Wellington Regiment	Flanders, Aug. 17, 1915
Berson, P.	"	—	—	France, Aug. 30, 1918
Jennings, A.	Openshaw	—	West Ridings	" Aug. 7, 1915
Taylor, T.	"	Sapper	R.E.	" Sept. 21, 1916
Coackly, J.	"	—	—	—
Hodge, Percy H.	Rugby	Corporal ...	King's Royal Rifles	France, Aug. 24, 1916
Purdham, W.	Carlisle	—	—	" May 28, 1915
Dickinson, G.	Rochdale	Private	R.A.M.C.	—
Wilson, F.	Sheffield East ...	—	—	France, Aug., 1915
Bulman, A.	"	Private	Labour Corps	" July 3, 1917
Jamleson, Robt. J.	Glasgow South..	—	—	" Dec. 2, 1915
Morgan, Robert...	"	—	Seaforth H'ghl'drs	" Sept. 25, 1916
Baker, R.	"	Private	H.L.I.	" July, 1916
Millar, R. B.	"	—	—	" Nov. 25, 1918
Dunn, William ...	"	—	—	" 1917
Walker, E.	"	Private	Cameron Highl'd's	" April 25, 1918
Swinney, F. W.	Newcastle East.	Sergeant ...	N'umberland Fus.	" October 6, 1915
English, J. G.	"	Sapper	Royal Engineers...	" Sept. 19, 1916
Cruickshanks, J.	"	Private	N'umberland Fus.	" October 8, 1918
Peters, J. W.	"	Sapper	Royal Engineers...	" May 28, 1918
Dickson, J.	Clydebank	L. Corporal.	Royal Highlanders	" October 3, 1918
Cameron, H.	"	Gunner	Field Ambulance..	" April 10, —
Lucas, A. E.	Chatham	Sapper	Royal Engineers...	" July 21, 1916
Cockburn, J.	Falkirk	Private	Royal Highlanders	" Sept. 7, 1916
Dunbar, R.	"	Private	Cameron H'l'nd'rs	" October 13, 1915
Jarvie, W.	"	Private	A.&S. Highlanders	" August 2, 1916
Taylor, J.	"	Sergeant ...	Canadian Infantry	" May 29, 1917
Dick, A.	"	Sapper	Royal Engineers...	" April 4, 1918
Smith, F. L.	Ipswich	Sergeant ...	Suffolk Regiment..	" April 11, 1915
Ferguson, D.	Glasgow East ...	Sapper	Royal Engineers...	Salonica, Dec. 23, 1918
Hunt, S.	Newark	—	—	" Dec. 17, 1916



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